Readings in Agricultural Economics Series : Volume 4

INTRODUCTION TO RURAL SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

by

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Social Background of Indian Nationalism

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CONTENTS

		Page
Foreword	.. ..	v
Preface	.. ..	vii

PART I
INTRODUCTION TO RURAL SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

1.	Study of Rural Sociology in India	1
2.	Rural Sociology, Its Origin and Scope	6
3.	Rural-Urban Differences	11
4.	Village, Its History	14
5.	Regional Approach to Rural Society	18
6.	Rural People	21
7.	Economic Life of the Rural People	24
8.	Rural Family	33
9.	Caste System in Rural India	41
10.	Political Life of the Rural People	49
11.	Rural Religion	59
12.	Rural Education	72
13.	Aesthetic Culture of the Rural People	86
14.	Changing Rural World	97
15.	Rural Sociology, A Guide to Rural Reconstruction	102
16.	Conclusion	109

PART II

READINGS IN RURAL SOCIOLOGY

			Page
1.	Definition of Rural and Urban Sociology	P. A. Sorokin and C. C. Zimmerman	117
2.	The Development of Rural Sociology	C. C. Taylor	120
3.	The Field of Rural Sociology	N. L. Sims	122
4.	An Approach to Rural Sociology	P. H. Landis	124
5.	Rural-Urban Differences	N. L. Sims	126
6.	Rural Society	C. C. Zimmerman	128
7.	An Ecological Approach to Rural Society	Alvin Boskoff	132
8.	Ecological Units of Rural Organizations	Dwight Sanderson	143
9.	Agriculture is Fundamental	Wilson Gee	148
10.	Self-Sufficiency or Commercialism	L. C. Gray	152
11.	Tenancy—Social Advantages and Disadvantages	Wilson Gee	155
12.	Familism as the Fundamental Trait of the Social and Political Organizations of Agricultural Societies	P. A. Sorokin, C. C. Zimmerman and C. J. Galpin	160
13.	Agrarian Movements	Alvin Johnson	167
14.	Religion in Primitive Cultures	Ralph Turner	173
15.	The Cinematograph and Rural Life	League of Nations	178
16.	Rural Life and Libraries	League of Nations	182
17.	The Rural Museum	League of Nations	185
18.	Aesthetic Culture of the Rural People	P. A. Sorokin, C. C. Zimmerman and C. J. Galpin	189
19.	Influence of Conditions of Rural Life on Recreation	League of Nations	202
20.	Significant Trends and Direction of Change	C. C. Taylor	210
21.	Techniques of Rural Change	N. L. Sims	224
22.	Elements in Rural Welfare	FAO	234
23.	Rural Organizations as a Field of Research	J. D. Black and C. C. Zimmerman	249
24.	The Theoretical Basis of Rural Organization Research	J. D. Black and C. C. Zimmerman	253
	Bibliography		255

FOREWORD

The Indian Society of Agricultural Economics has been popularising the study of agricultural economics in India for the last twelve years. As a part of this work, a series of publications entitled 'Readings in Agricultural Economics' was projected in 1949, with a view to assembling significant scientific literature from sources not easily accessible to students and research workers in this country. 'Introduction to Rural Sociology in India' is the 4th publication in this Series.

After attaining Independence, India is trying to establish a democratic society with accent on social justice and equality. For the last three years, powerful forces have been released which are changing, albeit slowly, the old pattern of life in every sphere, economic, social and cultural. Strenuous efforts are being made to increase production in agriculture through River Valley and Community Development Projects and Extension Services. Agrarian reforms for which legislation has been passed or contemplated are bound to have far reaching effects on rural social structure. Measures for improvement of health and education of the nation are included under the comprehensive Five Year Plan of Economic Development.

But India is a vast country with a variety of cultural and social norms, ranging from those of the head-hunting Nagas to the cosmopolitan cities under Western influence. At a time when we are consciously attempting to change the social pattern, it is desirable that facts in every region are studied in all their aspects, so that while respecting the uniqueness of each we may be able to chalk out a uniform line of action for building a better social milieu. This is indeed a tremendous task under the present state of a rigid social stratification and illiteracy, which offer considerable resistance to change and innovations. At this stage, we thought that a study of Rural Sociology in India would be very helpful as it would give a correct perspective of the various forces operating in the society.

The approach to rural development through community projects, schemes based on the T.V.A. experience, *"Sarvodya"*, multipurpose co-operatives, etc., indicates an awareness of the need for a wider comprehension of the problems at the social and economic level. The object of the schemes under community development is

to awaken the social consciousness of the rural community and mobilise their energies for agricultural reconstruction. This can be achieved only through a clear grasp of the social relationships which exist and react against each other among the rural community in all their aspects, individual and institutional.

Like Rural Economics, Rural Sociology is also a new science; some of the aspects in rural community life may have been studied in anthropology, economics, history of the caste systems and religious philosophy. Each of these aspects has no doubt its own importance but an integrated study of the whole rural social system would be of great value.

It was with this object that the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics invited Dr. A. R. Desai, Lecturer in Sociology, School of Economics and Sociology, University of Bombay, to prepare this volume. The study is not concerned with any selected or specified region or territory but tries to lay down a general pattern for the study of sociology in Rural India supplemented by a selection of extracts on the subject from eminent authors.

We do hope that this preliminary study will stimulate further interest in the subject as a whole, and of regions or even of groups of villages. Such studies would be very helpful in the execution of the programmes under the National Plan.

Bombay,
8th April 1953.

MANILAL B. NANAVATI
PRESIDENT.

PREFACE

"Introduction to Rural Sociology in India" is written with a view to focusing the attention of scholars, administrators, political and social workers and others, on a hitherto neglected subject in India.

It attempts to emphasise the importance of studying systematically a domain of social reality which has been either totally ignored or has commanded insufficient attention.

Indian society is overwhelmingly rural. However, as yet, a systematic, synthetic and interconnected account of the rural social organization and its developmental tendencies, has not been presented. In the initial chapter of this book, I have tried to bring out why there is an urgent need for the study of Rural Sociology in India.

Sociology is still a Cinderella among Social Sciences; it has not found its proper place even in the academic world. Rural Sociology, as such, is not even considered worthy of attention. This is unfortunate in a country, where a society which is overwhelmingly agrarian is undergoing a profound transformation.

The Indian Society of Agricultural Economics which has been trying to popularise studies in Rural Economics asked me to prepare this volume. I thought a pioneering effort of this nature, with all its limitations, may stimulate greater interest in this subject and may provoke more fruitful and scientific studies. I accepted the offer and the present work is its result.

The volume is composed of two parts. The first part draws attention to some of the basic aspects of the problem. The second part comprises selections from various works dealing with the subject by eminent scholars and associations, national and international.

In the first part, I have attempted to explain in a synthetic manner the scope of Rural Sociology in India. In it, I have tried to indicate how different aspects of rural life are organically interconnected and should be studied in their mutual interactions. The family, the caste, the economic institutions and the political organizations; also the religious, the educational, the aesthetic and other social phenomena of rural life have to be studied in their interactions and in a proper perspective. It also tries to bring out how in India a total picture of rural social drama requires a synthetic approach.

In short, it strives to emphasise how a sociological approach to rural life in India is vital for the understanding of its past, present and future trends.

In the process of preparing this book, I had the benefit of going through the valuable works of outstanding scholars on the subject. In the study of the subject, one cannot escape making a grateful reference to authorities like Sorokin, Zimmerman, Galpin, Sims, Landis, Sanderson, Smith, Herskovits, Kolb, Brunner, Taylor and others. The second part is therefore, composed of selected extracts from the writings and reports of eminent writers and associations. The selections are not comprehensive but only indicative. The scope of the selection was restricted due to a number of factors. Limitations of space, copyright difficulties, as well as the problem of making it as representative as possible, had to be kept in mind before choosing the excerpts.

The selections, however, have been made with a view to pointing out how the science of Rural Sociology is emerging, how various aspects of rural life are being studied sociologically, and how methods of research and trends of investigations are developing elsewhere. The main purpose of these Readings is to stress the theoretical significance and practical importance of Rural Sociology.

I trust the volume will serve as a useful introduction to the complex and vast problem, which deserves immediate attention.

Had it not been for the encouraging guidance from Sir Manilal B. Nanavati, this work would not have seen the light of the day. I am also indebted to Prof. M. L. Dantwala for having gone through the manuscript and making useful suggestions. To numerous friends and to the helpful staff of the Indian Society of Agricultural Economics I express my thanks for their co-operation and suggestions.

I must also thank all the publishers, authors and Research Organizations for so readily permitting me to utilize excerpts from their published work.

8-4-1953.
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PART I

INTRODUCTION TO RURAL SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

CHAPTER I

STUDY OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

Rural India, Not Inert

A systematic study of the rural social organization, of its structure, function and evolution, has not only become necessary but also urgent after the advent of Independence. The very process of achieving national freedom and transfer of power from the British to the Indians as also the colossal and very significant consequences which have followed this achievement, have revealed the signal importance of a careful, all-comprehensive, and methodical study of the rural society in our country.

The extensive participation of the rural masses in the long drawn out national liberation struggle as also the devastating communal frenzy which swept over the rural social world and resulted in the uprooting of a great section of the village population in a number of provinces, the deep ferment which is, at present, seething in the agrarian area and which frequently bursts out in varied forms of struggles between different strata of the people, the numerous prejudices which are corroding the life of the rural people and which manifest themselves in various caste, linguistic, provincial and other forms of tension, antagonism and conflict—all these phenomena reveal that rural India is not so inert and quiescent as it was once assumed.

Objectives Of The New State

The grave problems pertaining to rural society outlined above have been brought to the forefront in the post-Independence period. The Constitution of the independent India has already fixed the goal towards which Indian society is to develop. A secular state, based on universal franchise and with the welfare of its citizens as its prime objective as provided in the directive principles of the Constitution, is the national ideal which has emerged after the transfer of power. The realization of such an ideal, however, is a most complex and stupendous task which a people can set to itself.

To evolve a truly secular state in a country which is a citadel of the most stubborn religious prejudices rampant among its people; to create a social and cultural atmosphere for the intelligent exercise of universal adult franchise by the citizens who are living within the traditional, authoritarian, joint family, caste and semi-feudal so-

cial framework and the overwhelming majority of whom are illiterate; to develop a welfare economy in a country where the entire productive system is increasingly deteriorating; to implement such directive principles of the Constitution which accept the need to provide such rights as the right to work, the right to social security, the right to education and others to citizens when even the task of providing primary necessities to them is increasingly becoming more and more difficult to fulfil such a programme, it is vitally necessary to have a precise and thorough understanding of the Indian social structure and its developmental tendencies.

Predominantly Agrarian Background

Those who desire to strive for such a creative social transformation have to bear in mind that India is overwhelmingly an agrarian country; that not less than three-fourths of her population is engaged in agriculture; and that the agricultural economy, which forms the material basis of the life of this vast mass of the population, determines their social organization (the institutional matrix within which their life processes flow) as well as moulds their psychological and ideological life. Further, since the rural society forms the major sector of the Indian society, the specific programme of the re-casting of the former must, it must be borne in mind, inevitably play a decisive role in any scheme of transformation of the latter on a higher economic and cultural basis.

Urban Bias Of Scholars

Statisticians, economists, sociologists, social workers and government agencies have, hitherto, overwhelmingly focussed their attention on the study of the phenomena and problems of the urban society, though by far the greater portion of the Indian humanity lives in the rural area amidst conditions of immense material and cultural poverty. Even literature dealing with the factual data about the life of the rural people is very meagre. It is true that there has grown a literature, though insufficient, devoted to the study of different kinds of soil, manure, seeds, techniques of agriculture, land holdings, land tenures, processes of marketing of crops and other matters pertaining to agrarian economy. There are even some fragmentary studies delineating the life history of some castes and tribes and indicative studies of some villages. However, uptil now, neither have the problems of the rural society been formulated in all their bewildering complexity and variety, nor have a scientific diagnosis and solution of these problems been offered.

The study of the Indian rural society, which varies from state to state, from even district to district, due to their extreme geographi-

cal, economic, historical, ethnic and other peculiarities, hitherto made, has been spasmodic, insufficient and often superficial. Such a study cannot give an authentic, composite picture of the variegated landscape of the rural life, nor can it serve as a guide for evolving a scientific programme of reconstruction of the rural society, so essential for the renovation of the entire Indian society.

In fact, a concrete and comprehensive study of the rural society in all its aspects, ecological, morphological, institutional and cultural, has hardly begun.

Study Of Rural Society, Reasons

It is, however, urgently necessary to make a scientific and systematic study of the rural society, of its economic foundation and social and cultural superstructure, of its institutions and their functions, of the problems arising from the rapid process of disintegration which it is undergoing and which even threatens its breakdown. It is essential to note the following vital facts in such a study:

(1) India is a classic land of agriculture. Its long past history, its complex social organization and religious life, its varied cultural pattern, can hence be understood only if a proper study is made of the rise, growth, crystallization and subsequent fossilisation and break up of the self-sufficient village community, the principal pivot of the Indian society only till recently.

(2) Due to historical reasons, the existing Indian rural society has become a veritable mosaic of various types of rural societies and hence reveals a diversified cultural pattern. The culture of the hunting and food gathering tribes; the culture of the primitive hoe-agriculturists; further, all the varied cultures of peoples engaged in agrarian production with plough and bullock, as also the modern culture of a rural people influenced by new technical and economic forces—all these cultures are juxtaposed in the contemporary rural India. Further, the Indian rural humanity is also being influenced by the ideological currents of the modern era. Consequently we find, in the Indian rural world today, the persistence of primitive cults of magic and animism, polytheism and pantheism of the ancient world, monotheism and other idealistic philosophic world outlooks inherited from the ancient medieval periods as also a minor current of modern rationalist world view. This has transformed it into a veritable museum of different and even conflicting cults and ideologies.

(3) The unique agrarian socio-economic structure of India experienced a decisive transformation as a result of the impact of the

British conquest and rule. On the eve of the British conquest of India, the Indian rural society was composed of a multitude of villages. Each village lived almost an independent, atomistic, self-sufficient social and economic existence. The village represented a closed society based on economic autarchy and social life governed by caste and community rules.

In the economic sphere, the village experienced a steady transformation during the British period. Its economic self-sufficiency was dissolved. It slowly began to produce for the Indian and the foreign market and, not, as before, for meeting the needs of the village population. The village economy became increasingly an integral part of the national and even world economy. The influx of cheap foreign and, subsequently, of indigenous industrial goods into the village, progressively undermined the village artisan industries. The old self-sufficient economy based on an equilibrium between the village agriculture and the village artisan industry was thus disrupted.

In the social field, the rule of custom enforced by the joint family, the caste and the village panchayat, was gradually replaced by the reign of laws made by the centralized British state in India and administered by its own revenue, executive and judicial officials posted in the village. This considerably undermined the powers of the joint family, the caste and the village panchayat.

The introduction of the modern means of transport and communication accelerated the processes mentioned above.

Every aspect of the village life, social, economic, political and cultural, experienced a steady transformation. The old pattern of village life, the old structure of village society, became appreciably changed.

Since the transformation was mainly brought about by a foreign power to serve its own political and economic interests, it resulted in the destruction of the old type of the rural society without its being replaced by a socially healthy, economically progressive and culturally more advanced new type. The transformation culminated in the emergence of the present impoverished and culturally backward village which, moreover, lacked stability and a definite structural design.

The Indian agrarian economy is at present in a state of acute crisis. This has resulted in the unbearable economic misery of the rural people. The agrarian situation has consequently become almost explosive.

It is, therefore, vitally necessary to focus attention on the crisis of the rural economy. The solution of the crisis is the essential precondition not only for eliminating poverty of the rural population but also for building a prosperous national economy which can guarantee a higher material standard of life to all citizens.

It should be noted that the role of social institutions in accelerating or retarding the fulfilment of an advanced programme of agrarian reconstruction is greater in India than in any other country. Programmes and policies of rural renovation based on pure economic factors have not, therefore, met with appreciable success. The role of such institutions as the caste and the joint family organization in thwarting such programmes and policies has not been hitherto properly grasped. The necessity of *Rural Sociology* becomes all the more important in India.

Rural Sociology, Its Urgent Need

To reconstruct such a rural society on a higher basis, it is urgently necessary to study not only the economic forces, but also the social, the ideological and other forces operating in that society. It is a complex and colossal task.

As referred to above, only stray, spasmodic efforts have been hitherto made to study the life processes of the Indian rural society. No systematic study has still been launched to study that society in all its aspects, to study its life processes in their movement and, further, in their inter-connections.

In fact, Indian rural sociology or the science of the laws governing the specific Indian rural social organism has still to be created. Such a science is, however, the basic premise for the renovation of the Indian rural society, so indispensable for the renovation of the Indian society as a whole.

CHAPTER II

RURAL SOCIOLOGY, ITS ORIGIN AND SCOPE

A. Its Origin

Rural sociology or the science of the laws of development of rural society in general has come into being only in recent times.

Early Reflections

Reflections on rural society, indeed, are as old as the rural society itself. In the past, social thinkers had made attempts to comprehend the life processes of the rural world and to advance solutions of the problems arising therefrom. A comprehensive survey of the views of eminent thinkers belonging to various countries in the past epochs regarding rural life and its problems as they emerged in the changing rural society in various stages of development has been made in the "Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology" Vol. I, edited by Sorokin, Zimmerman and Galpin. It reveals how some of the basic features of rural society and urgent problems of changing rural life had commanded the interest and attention of earnest social thinkers of ancient, medieval and early modern periods and impelled them to make sociological reflections, though they would betray to the well-equipped modern rural sociologists a lack of scientific methodology.

Systematic Observations From XIXth Century

It was since about the middle of the nineteenth century that more systematic observations on the history of the origin and transformation of rural society have been advanced. The impact of the capitalist industrial civilization upon the rural economy and social structure, in various parts of the world, forced the attention of scholars to the study of the trends of rural social development. Research in the subject of the origin and the nature of village communities which were undergoing transformation was launched.

Olufsen, Maurer, Maine, Hexthausen, Gierke, Elton, Stemann, Innes, Coulanges, Nasse, Laveleye, Baden Powell, Ashley, Pollock, Maitland, Lewinski, Seebohm, Gomme, Guiraud, Jubainville, Slater, Vinogradoff, Meitzon and others are some of the outstanding scholars who have thrown great light on rural society from various angles.

Subsequently eminent scholars, professors and others interested in the phenomena of the rural life have published in various countries enormous material dealing with its various aspects.

As An Organized Discipline In The U.S.A.

However, rural sociology as an organized discipline consciously developed, is of very recent origin. Due to historical reasons it has originated in the U.S.A. and slowly tends to draw attention elsewhere as its importance is being realized. During what is called "Exploiter Period" of American society (1890-1920), a period when the American rural society witnessed all round decay, a considerable literature, describing and analysing the problems arising out of its growing crisis, came into existence. This literature, however, did not explore, locate, and formulate the fundamental laws governing the development of rural society. It created the prerequisites for the birth of the science of rural society but did not still create that science. However, the beginnings of rural sociology may be traced to those "streams" of publications.

The first valuable work on the subject was the Report on the Countrylife Commission appointed by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1907. A number of Doctorate theses based on the study of the rural community comprised further significant literature dealing with problems of rural life and providing revealing information thereon. Finally a group of rural church and school studies made by individuals interested in an investigation of maladjustments in rural life constituted the third "stream" of publications. This literature served as the basis for creating the science of rural sociology in the U.S.A. We will next survey it in detail.

The Countrylife Commission, under the chairmanship of Dean Bailey, the eminent scholar of rural problems, circulated 500,000 questionnaires to farmers and leaders of rural life and received nearly 100,000 replies. The Commission, on the basis of this investigation, published a report in which they attempted to analyse and diagnose the defects and deformities of rural society. "This report actually provided what might be called a charter for Rural Sociology."

"An American Town", "Quaker Hill" and "A Hoosier Village", of which James Michel Williams, Warren H. Wilson and Newell L. Sims were respectively authors, represented further studies of the American rural community. These studies were based on statistical and historical data and field-interview techniques and were submitted as research documents at the Columbia University between 1906 and 1912. Dr. Warren Wilson, along with others interested in the processes of rural life, carried on a number of rural church studies. These studies, together with some rural school studies and "The Social Anatomy of an Agricultural Community" by Dr. C. J. Galpin

based on an investigation into rural life made by him at the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Wisconsin in 1915, comprised additional literature germane to rural sociology until 1916.

"Rural Sociology" by Prof. John M. Gillettee published in 1916 served as the first college text book on the subject. Subsequently, a number of writers devoted themselves to the study of rural life and published valuable works which also enriched the literature on the subject. The publication of "A Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology" in 1930 recognised as an "Epoch-making" work contributed decisively to accelerate the advance of rural sociology.

Later on, other intellectuals also focussed their attention on the subject and helped its further development.

Sorokin, Zimmerman, Galpin, Taylor, Kolb, Brunner, Sims, Dwight Sanderson, Landis, and Smith are some of the outstanding social thinkers in the U.S.A. whose intellectual labour resulted in a phenomenal advance of the new science of rural sociology.

The founding of the journal "Rural Sociology" in 1935 (at present a monthly) and the establishment of "Rural Sociological Society of America" in 1937 were further landmarks in the history of its growth.

In the U.S.A., rural sociology, though a new science and still in a state of immaturity, is commanding wider and wider interest among social thinkers to-day. More than eight hundred professors and research workers are engaged in developing that science in that country.

Its Present State

In other countries also, increasing attention is being paid to study and systematise this branch of study.

The various studies organized by the League of Nations and embodied in a number of monographs, together with the recent studies made by such organizations as UNESCO, FAO and others, have also contributed to the rapid advance of rural sociology.

Such is the history of the genesis and growth of rural sociology, the youngest amongst all sciences. It has started taking roots and is slowly but securely spreading itself in various parts of the world including India which needs it the most in view of its very large rural population with innumerable complex problems.

B. Its Scope

As in the case of every young science, especially of a young social science, a great controversy has taken place over the question of the definition and scope of rural sociology among scholars engaged in the endeavour to develop it.

Controversies

Is rural sociology a distinct science or is it merely an application of the general principles of sociology (or the science of society as a whole) to the sphere of rural social phenomena? Should rural sociology restrict its scope merely to the life processes of rural society or should it also include, as an integral part, a study of rural and urban social life, comparative as well as in their mutual interconnection and interaction and, further, have as its central concept what Zimmerman describes as "The mechanism and effects of urbanization and ruralization upon a population"?

These are some of the principal problems over which extensive ledge about rural society and laws governing its development or should it also serve as a guide and suggest practical programmes of reform or reconstruction of that society in the economic, social or cultural fields? In short, should rural sociology merely give an objective authentic composite picture of the changing rural life in all its multifold and multiform aspects or also function as an ideological instrument to remould it according to a social purpose and a practical plan?

These are some of the principal problems over which extensive controversy is at present raging among sociologists. Such a disagreement among social scientists is not a characteristic peculiar to the field of rural sociology. Even regarding sociology in general, neither a clear, universally accepted definition nor an unanimous view of the scope of its study have as yet emerged among sociologists. The sub-domains of the single concretely whole domain of social life are so intermingled, interacting and even overlapping, that it is difficult to isolate one of them, study it and evolve a distinct science disclosing the laws of its structure and its evolution. Hence it is that disputes take place among social thinkers regarding the method and approach to be adopted to evolve a social science.

Basic Agreement

In spite of a wide divergence of views among rural sociologists regarding the definition, scope, and objective of rural sociology and also about the emphasis to be laid on this or that factor of the rural

society as the point of departure for its study, there also exists a number of basic agreements among them.

All rural sociologists recognize that the social life of the community is divided into two distinct segments, rural and urban. Though these segments interact among themselves, each is sufficiently distinct from the other.

All of them hold the view that social life in rural setting exhibits characteristics and tendencies which are peculiar to it, which constitute its specificness and which, therefore, sharply distinguish it from social life in urban setting.

All of them unanimously declare that the prime objective of rural sociology should be to make a scientific, systematic and comprehensive study of the rural social organization, of its structure, functions and objective tendencies of development, and, on the basis of such a study, to discover the law of its development. Since every science, social or natural, has for its aim the discovery of the hitherto hidden law of development of a domain of nature or society, the basic task of Rural Sociology, they unanimously declare, is to discover the law of development of rural society.

It will be very instructive to know the viewpoints of eminent authorities on the subject of rural sociology some of whom have, in fact, been the architect of that science in recent times. We shall present these viewpionts in part II.

CHAPTER III

RURAL-URBAN DIFFERENCES

After briefly referring to the origin and the scope of rural sociology, we will endeavour to locate and study the distinctive features of the two types of social phenomena, rural and urban.

Need To Distinguish Rural-Urban Settings

Social life in the countryside moves and develops in a rural setting just as social life in the urban area moves and develops in an urban setting. Their respective settings considerably determine rural and urban social life.

A correct comprehension of the specific characteristics of the rural framework is, therefore, indispensable for a proper grasp of the distinct features of rural social life. Such a study constitutes the first task of the rural sociologist and can be accomplished by studying in contrast the distinctive features of rural and urban settings. A brief outline of the principal points of contrast between the rural and urban settings will show how the different structures and life-processes of rural and urban societies are to a great extent the consequence of the difference between those different settings.

Significant Criteria To Distinguish Them

Outstanding sociologists have laid down a number of significant criteria for distinguishing the rural social world from the urban social world, such as the social composition of population, "the cultural heritage", the magnitude of material wealth, social stratification of the population, the degree of the complexity of social structure and social life, the intensity and variety of social contact and others. They have finally attempted to trace the sharp differences and contrasts between the two types of social phenomena, rural and urban, largely to the basic differences between the rural and urban settings.

The following are the most important criteria for distinguishing the rural social world from the urban social world:

(1) Occupational differences.
(2) Environmental differences.
(3) Differences in the sizes of the communities.
(4) Differences in the density of the population.
(5) Differences in the homogeneity and heterogeneity of the population.

(6) Differences in the social mobility.
(7) Differences in the direction of migration.
(8) Differences in the social differentiation and stratification.
(9.) Differences in the system of social interaction.

The following table reproduced from "Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology"[1] reveals the decisive differences between the rural and the urban worlds:

	Rural World	Urban World
Occupation	Totality of cultivators and their families. In the community are usually a few representatives of several non-agricultural pursuits.	Totality of people engaged principally in manufacturing, mechanical pursuits, trade, commerce, professions, governing, and other non-agricultural occupations.
Environment	Predominance of nature over anthropo-social environment. Direct relationship to nature.	Greater isolation from nature. Predominance of man-made environment over natural. Poorer air. Stone and iron.
Size of community	Open farms or small communities, "agriculturalism" and size of community are negatively correlated.	As a rule in the same country and at the same period, the size of urban community is much larger than the rural community. In other words, urbanity and size of community are positively correlated.
Density of population	In the same country and at the same period the density is lower than in urban community. Generally density and rurality are negatively correlated.	Greater than in rural communities. Urbanity and density are positively correlated.
Heterogeneity and homogeneity of the population	Compared with urban populations, rural communities are more homogeneous in racial and psychological traits. (Negative correlation with heterogeneity).	More heterogeneous than rural communities (in the same country and at the same time). Urbanity and heterogeneity are positively correlated.

[1] P. A. Sorokin and C. C. Zimmerman: "Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology", pp. 56-57.

	Rural World	Urban World
Social differentiation and stratification	Rural differentiation and stratification less than urban.	Differentiation and stratification show positive correlation with urbanity.
Mobility	Territorial, occupational and other forms of social mobility of the population are comparatively less intensive. Normally the migration current carries more individuals from the country to the city.	More intensive. Urbanity and mobility are positively correlated. Only in the periods of social catastrophy is the migration from the city to the country greater than from the country to the city.
System of interaction	Less numerous contacts per man. Narrower area of the interaction system of its members and the whole aggregate. More prominent part is occupied by primary contacts. Predominance of personal and relatively durable relations. Comparative simplicity and sincerity of relations. "Man is interacted as a human person."	More numerous contacts. Wider area of interaction system per man and per aggregate. Predominance of secondary contacts. Predominance of impersonal casual and short-lived relations. Greater complexity, manifoldedness, superficiality and standardized formality of relations. Man is interacted as a "number" and "address."

CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE, ITS HISTORY

Village, A Historical Category

After having surveyed the chief characteristic differences between the rural and urban segments of social life, we will now proceed to analyse the structural pattern of the rural society since it provides the matrix within which the whole drama of rural life is unfolded.

The village is the unit of the rural society. It is the theatre wherein the quantum of rural life unfolds itself and functions.

Like every social phenomenon the village is a historical category. The emergence of the village at a certain stage in the evolution of the life of man, its further growth and development in subsequent periods of human history, the varied structural changes it experienced during thousands of years of its existence, the rapid and basic transformation it has undergone during the last hundred and fifty years since the Industrial Revolution—all these constitute a very fascinating and challenging study.

Plough Agriculture, Its Significance

The rise of the village is bound up with the rise of agricultural economy in history. The emergence of the village signified that man had passed from the nomadic mode of collective life to the settled one. This was basically due to the improvement of tools of production which made agriculture and hence settled life on a fixed territorial zone possible.

How humanity, in different parts of the world, passed from the nomadic hunting and food gathering stage to that based on roving hoe agriculture and, thereafter, on settled plough agriculture carried on by means of draft animals, has been one of the most difficult and complex problems in the field of social research.

With the invention of the plough, man could develop stable agriculture, the basic source of assured food supply. Man's nomadic mode of life ceased. No longer men roamed in herds from place to place in search of means of subsistence. They settled on a definite territory and organized villages based on agricultural economy. Agrarian communities with villages as their fixed habitation and agriculture as their main occupation, came into existence. This event

marked a landmark in the history of mankind, inaugurating a higher phase of social existence. Agriculture assured the community, for the first time, a relatively stable food supply in contrast to previous stages of social life. While food supply derived from such sources as hunting, fishing, fruit gathering and migratory hoe agriculture had always been insufficient and precarious, grain and other types of food products derived from plough agriculture could be counted upon and also be stored for use in periods of emergencies, thereby assuring relative food security for the future.

In the agricultural phase the struggle for existence became relatively less acute for man. Further, at a certain stage of the development of agricultural economy, due to the greater productivity of agriculture, a section of the community could be liberated from the necessity of participating in food production and could therefore concentrate on secondary industrial or ideological activity. This gave momentum to the growth of technology, arts, sciences and philosophy. It also brought about, though slowly, the significant transition in the social organization of humanity, from an organization founded on kinship and clan to that based on territorial ties. With the development of agriculture at a certain level, mankind took a leap from totemistic collectivist clan society to territorial civil society with its distinct multi-class social structure and the resultant institution of the state.

Civilization thus began with the development of agriculture. The village—the first settled form of collective human habitation and the product of the growth of agricultural economy—thus historically gave birth to rural society, and from the surplus of its food resources, nourished the town which subsequently came into existence.

Different Types Of Village Aggregates

In the history of different peoples living in different parts of the world, different types of villages emerged with the rise and spread of agriculture. This was mainly due to differences in geographical environments in which those peoples lived. Further, the early village of a people also underwent changes in time due to its subsequent technical, economic, and social evolution as well as due to the impact of other societies on it.

The history of the village, in time and space, reveals such diverse village types as the Saxon village, the German Mark, the Russian Mir, the self-sufficient Indian Gram, the village of the feudal Europe which was an integral part of the manor; and finally the modern village,

which is an integral part of national and world economic systems, with its variants such as the U.S.A. village, the typical West European village, the village of the backward modern countries of Asia, the village of the Soviet Union based on collectivized agricultural economy and others.

Hence the student of rural society should study the village, the basic unit of rural society as it originated and underwent a constant state of development and change due to the action of its own developing internal forces as also due to its interaction with other societies.

Criteria To Classify Village Aggregates

Eminent sociologists have advanced a number of criteria to classify village communities.

(1) According to one criterion the village aggregates have been classified according to the types which evolved during the period of the transition from man's nomadic existence to settled village life. Thus villages have been divided into three groups: (i) the Migratory agricultural villages where the people live in fixed abodes only for a few months; (ii) the Semi-permanent agricultural villages where the population resides for a few years and then migrates due to the exhaustion of the soil; and (iii) the Permanent agricultural villages where the settled human aggregates live for generations and even centuries[1].

(2) According to the second criterion villages have been classified into grouped (or nucleated) villages and dispersed villages. In grouped villages the farmers dwell in the village proper in a cluster. They work on the fields which lie outside the village site. Since they dwell together in a single habitat, they develop a compact life. In the case of the non-nucleated dispersed village type, the farmers live separately on their respective farms. Their habitats being thus dispersed, their social life assumes a different form[2].

(3) Village aggregates have been also classified according to a third criterion, that of social differentiation, stratification, mobility and land ownership[3].

According to this criterion, village aggregates have been grouped into six broad types viz. (1) that composed of peasant joint owners; (2) that composed of peasant joint tenants; (3) that composed of farmers who are mostly individual owners, but also include some

[1]"Encyclopaedia of Social Science" Vol. 15, "Village Community" by Harold J. Peake. p. 254.

[2]Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology; Vol. I p. 263.

[3]Ibid; p. 560.

tenants and labourers; (4) that composed of individual farmer tenants; (5) that composed of employees of a great private landowner; and finally (6) that composed of labourers and employees of the state, the Church, the city or the public landowner.

Need For Systematic Classification In India

A systematic classification of Indian village aggregates on the basis of the above criteria and a study of their history will provide valuable information about village communities in India, about varied types of social institutions which have come into being in rural India, and also on the complex cultural patterns which have influenced and been influencing the life processes of the Indian rural people.

An exhaustive survey of Indian villages co-relating the village types classified according to these three principles will help to disclose the laws of the rise and development of Indian village communities. It will also help historians and sociologists to locate the laws of the peculiar development of Indian society and, further, will assist rural workers to evolve scientific programmes of rural reconstruction.

CHAPTER V

REGIONAL APPROACH TO RURAL SOCIETY

Significance Of Regional Approach

One of the important aspects from which rural society is increasingly being analysed is the aspect of its spatial organization.

What factors determine the growth of varied types of villages, what factors operate to combine a cluster of villages into an agrarian region, what factors tend to transform an agrarian region into a cultural, linguistic or political region, and how do regions evolve into a province—these problems are of considerable significance in the study of rural society.

Factors Generating Regional Variations

Sociologists have attempted to locate the factors explaining this process. According to them, some of the important factors, which have determined the structural pattern of the village, the formation of regional and other bigger units and the interrelations of the village with those units, are as follows:

(1) Natural conditions like relief, configurations, soil, water resources and others; (2) the stage of agrarian economy, whether it is the nomadic stage, the stage of fixed subsistence agriculture or that of commercial agriculture; and (3) the nature of social conditions, such as needs of defence, forms of property and others.

Grouped And Dispersed Habitats

The first great division which has been made of village communities from the ecological angle is that of nucleated or grouped villages and dispersed habitats. This distinction is vital from the point of view of the study of the entire social life of the rural community. The members of a rural community who dwell in villages have generally stronger social urges, exhibit a stronger feeling of social cohesion, and possess greater ability for co-operation than those who are dispersed and live on their respective farms. Each type of habitat furnishes a different framework for social life. The nucleated village is marked by "proximity, contact, community of ideas and sentiments" while in dispersed habitats "everything bespeaks separation, everything marks the fact of dwelling apart".

Study Of Larger Rural Regions, Difficulties

The study of the emergence of a larger rural area is one of the most baffling problems confronting the student of rural society. The factors which have combined to evolve homogeneous rural regions demand a very careful examination. Again we find that the larger rural regions change their characteristics with the change in the techno-economic, socio-economic and socio-political forces. The epoch of self-sufficiency evolved one category of regions. Under the impact of Industrial Revolution and production for market, a totally new type of rural areas came into being. The change from market economy to planned economy, where the agrarian sector is consciously developed as a part of the total life of the community, is creating in some countries and will create in other countries a new type of regional units. And, above all, the gigantic development of productive forces which is evolving an international economic and cultural community in the modern epoch is forcing the students of human society and especially of rural society to discover the appropriate variety of rural regions which will be in consonance with this development.

Efforts are being made to define economic, linguistic, administrative, religious and cultural regions in various countries. Efforts are also being made to find out where these regions coincide and also to study the laws which bring about this concurrence.

The works of Sanderson, Kolb, Taylor and others which embody an intensive study of rural economic and cultural zones in the U.S.A. have thrown considerable light on the phenomenon of the development of such zones. Various studies of primitive tribes—their geographical milieu, technical equipment, economic organization, social institutional structure, religion, arts and culture and, further, their transformation under the impact of communities belonging to various stages of civilized life—also furnish rich material for discovering the laws of rural development. Works dealing with the role of geographical factors—such as mountain, river, desert, sea, rainfall, various species of trees and animals—in indirectly or directly influencing the nature of economic organization, social institutions, styles of architecture, and beliefs and other ideological elements of man's life, also provide valuable clues for a correct understanding of the emergence of varied rural cultures.

The environmental and regional approach will help to distinguish chief village types and village social structures. It will also assist in scientifically classifying principal regional, district and provincial units. It will also aid in locating the underlying factors which

have operated to create distinct culture-areas. And finally it will help to evolve a systematic account of the evolution of Indian society as a whole.

Ecological Map Of India, An Urgent Need

A detailed map of India indicating various natural and economic regions; indicating the areas inhabited by populations living in various stages of economic development; showing linguistic regions including regions based on different dialects as well as different variations of the main language; and showing, further, religious regions based on different religious beliefs prevailing among the people; will throw great light on some of the most burning problems of Indian society and will also assist those engaged in the difficult task of reforming rural society to locate some of the fundamental causes of the present crisis of that society.

CHAPTER VI

RURAL PEOPLE

The first task confronting the rural sociologist is to define the rural people and distinguish them from the urban population. Various approaches have been suggested for that purpose by eminent thinkers. Classification adopted by Government Census Departments in various countries is, however, generally accepted as the most convenient, though it may vary from one country to other.

Ratio Of Rural-Urban Population

The next task before the student of the rural people is to determine the ratio of rural and urban populations. In many countries, this ratio in a great measure indicates the level of living of the people as a whole since it shows the relative proportion of industry and agriculture and hence the total wealth of the people. The ratio further considerably influences the apportionment of social amenities within the country. It thereby serves as a guide for evolving a correct programme for social advance. One of the great mistakes committed by a number of reformers and social engineers is to transplant mechanically the techniques adopted for reform in a country inhabited by a small agrarian population and with a vast area of land to a country inhabited by an overwhelmingly agrarian population and with scarce land resources. The recent effort to introduce measures adopted to improve the agrarian sector of the U.S.A. which is overwhelmingly industrial to predominantly agrarian backward countries of Asia is an instance of such an error. Even within the same country a detailed study of the ratios of rural-urban population in different regions is essential because these differences considerably alter the nature of problems relating to those regions. For instance, the problems of Gujarat and those of Bihar are different as there is a difference in the proportion of rural-urban population of these states.

Density Of Rural People

The next important problem is that of the density of the people living on the land. Sociologists, after adequate investigation, have reached the conclusion that the average density beyond a particular limit indicates an undesirable over-concentration of the people in that area. This is because the density of the population affects production and distribution and also generates various social reactions which

greatly influence the total life of a society. The density of the population further affects the level of the standard of living of the people.

A systematic study of the density of the population in different regions and districts in India and also of the proportion of various groups belonging to diverse castes, religions, and vocations which comprise the population, will unfold the veriegated picture of the complex social life of the Indian people with all its multiple tensions, antagonisms as well as mutual adjustments among these groups.

Birth And Death Rate

The study of birth rates, death rates, rates of suicides, specific bodily diseases and such other matters regarding the rural population is another important aspect of a demographic study of the rural society as it reveals the quantitative and qualitative growth or decline of the rural people. Further, when this study is correlated to that of the social, economic and religious life processes of various social groups, it provides intelligent and correct criteria of evaluating the norms of those groups.

General Health And Longevity

Apart from a study of the death and survival rates prevailing among the rural people, there are also other means to determine their vitality such as a study of their general health and longevity. Further, estimates of mortality prevailing among separate groups such as infants, females and old people; upper, lower and middle social strata; and land labourers, farmers, artisans, and other social categories, will give a detailed picture of the vitality of various sections of the rural people.

Age And Sex Groups

Another aspect of the life of a population which requires a close study is their distribution in age and sex groups. The analysis of age groups gives us a correct understanding of the proportion of the people who are of productive age and those who are to be sustained by the society. The preponderance of children and the aged over the working section of the people would considerably influence their economic and social life.

Similarly the analysis of the sex composition is also essential since it is generally recognized by sociologists that "sex mores, social codes, social rituals, and social institutions are all likely to be affected where extremely unbalanced sex ratios are found".

Other Aspects Of The Composition Of The People

Caste, race, nationality and religious composition of the people has a great social significance. It gives rise to a rich, complex, diversified social life and varied patterns of culture. More often it breeds animosities, antagonisms and conflicts. We know how in India in recent years, the multi-religious composition of the Indian people engendered ghastly communal Hindu-Muslim riots. We know how nationality conflicts are steadily corroding the body politic of India.

A very peculiar type of social grouping which is found in India is the caste grouping. A student of the Indian society who fails to closely and carefully study this variety of social grouping will miss the very essence of that society. Looking to its important role in India a separate chapter has been devoted to the sociological significance of the caste elsewhere.

A systematic co-ordinated and inter-related study of the rural people from various angles is an urgent need.

CHAPTER VII

ECONOMIC LIFE OF THE RURAL PEOPLE

Agriculture, Its Specificness

Since economic production is the basic activity of a human aggregate, the mode of production (productive forces and social relations of production) plays a determining role in shaping the social structure, the psychology and the ideology of that human aggregate.

Rural society is based predominantly on agriculture. Village agriculture is sharply distinguished from urban industry by the fact that it is based on direct extraction from Nature by man.

Land is the basic means of production in the countryside. Land is a part of Nature, though made arable by human labour. From land, the rural people produce, by means of technique and their labour power, such a variety of agrarian products as food, cotton, jute, tea, coffee, tobacco, and others.

Urban industry only transforms the products of agriculture into industrial products. In city factories and mills, such agricultural products like cotton, jute and sugarcane are transformed into cotton and jute cloth and sugar respectively.

This basic difference between agriculture and industry plays a significant role in shaping the social institutions, the psychology and the ideology of the rural and urban populations.

Further, the level of production and the way in which the products are distributed among the different strata of a society, determine the level of the material prosperity of the society as a whole and of the various socio-economic groups comprising it. They also, to a very large extent, mould the institutional set up of that society as well as the cultural life of its people.

For instance, in India, the primitive nature of agriculture, the resultant low level of agricultural production and the specific types of land relations which determine the differing shares of agricultural products among the social groups composing the rural society, explain the general poverty of the rural people, their hierarchic gradation into a pyramidal system of socio-economic groups and, further, their distinct social institutions and cultural backwardness. They also largely fix their customs, conceptions and social mores.

Motif Of Production

The rural sociologist should find out whether, in the given society, agricultural production has for its objective the direct satisfaction of the subsistence needs of the rural aggregate or is carried on for the market and profit of the producers who do not themselves consume their products. This means whether the agricultural economy is a subsistence or a market economy.

For instance, in pre-British India, village agriculture mainly produced for meeting the needs of the village population. This subsistence village agricultural economy was transformed into a market economy during the British period. This was due to a variety of causes. The British Government created private property in land in the form of ryotwari and zamindari. In the ryotwari area, it introduced the system under which the peasant producer had to pay to the state land tax in cash instead of in kind. The land tax grew progressively heavy resulting into the increasing indebtedness of the agriculturist. In the zamindari area, the burden of increasing rent imposed on the tenant producer by the zamindar impoverished the tenant and saddled him also with the ever expanding burden of debt. Largely due to the necessity for cash for the payment of land tax, rent and debt, the agriculturist, the peasant proprietor or the tenant, was more and more constrained to produce for the market. Thus village agriculture increasingly ceased to produce for directly satisfying the needs of the village population and began to produce for the national and subsequently even world market.

There is a third and a new conception of the objective of agricultural production. According to it, not only should agriculture produce to meet the needs of the community but also it should be adapted to the *consciously assessed needs* of the community. The exponents of this view argue that this will not only eliminate the competitive market intervening between the producers and the consumers but will also transform agriculture into planned agriculture, a planned sector of the social economy conforming to the needs of the community. They further declare that planned agriculture together with planned industry will transform the entire social economy into a planned economy which alone would make the maximum use of the natural, the technical and human labour resources of the community possible with the result that the material wealth of society would enormously increase and hence the standard of life of the people would rise higher and higher. The rural sociologist needs to devote greater attention to this aspect of the study of agricultural production. This is because not only the technique of agriculture but also the motif of agricultural

production determine the level of that production and the resultant wealth of the agrarian community and, therefore its standard of life.

Techniques Of Production

It is vitally necessary to initiate the study of rural society with an investigation into the character of the technique of production used by the rural aggregate for the purpose of agriculture.

The history of agriculture reveals that a variety of implements have been employed by rural communities. Generally speaking, we can divide the rural technical cultures into the following three types:

(1) *Hoe culture*

During this phase of mankind's existence, even the plough had not been invented. It was the early stage of agriculture when it was carried on only through the hoe operated by the human hand.

(2) *Plough culture*

During the next historical phase, man invented the plough. Being technically superior to the hoe, the plough enabled the agricultural community to produce more with the expenditure of the same amount of human labour power. The plough culture implied the use of animals in agricultural operations. Though our country has advanced beyond hoe culture centuries ago, the hoe still lingers in the existing phase of plough culture in some agrarian areas.

(3) *The higher technical cultural phase of Tractors and Fertilizers*

The invention of power-driven machinery in modern times resulted into the production of such amazing labour-saving agricultural machines as tractors and fertilizers. Though this new agricultural technique is used on a large scale in a number of advanced countries at present, it has not yet displaced the plough to any appreciable extent in our country.

The productivity of the labour of the agriculturist and hence the volume of agricultural products have increased in proportion to the advance of agricultural technique. The extent of the material wealth of rural society, therefore, depends mainly upon the technical basis of agriculture.

It may be noted that the power basis of agriculture has also changed in history. As pointed above, the hoe excludes the use of draft animals or any kind of power. The plough is worked with the aid of draft animals. The tractor eliminates even the necessity of draft animals and is propelled by oil power.

The technique of production also determines the division of labour among the members of a society actually engaged in the production process. It gives rise to a definite number of functions in the production process. This results in the emergence of various working groups, each of them attending to a particular function in production.

Thus we have a greater division of labour where the technique employed in production is higher. Correspondingly, we have a greater number of working groups.

Where agriculture is based on the plough, the division of labour is limited. The whole process of agricultural production in various stages is carried on by a peasant family on the basis of the simple and restricted division of labour among its members. In contrast to this, where agriculture is carried on by means of tractors and fertilizers, we have not only a larger physical unit of agriculture (land) but also a greater technical division of labour. We have then such working groups as engineers, electricians, chemists, tractor drivers and others.

The rural sociologist requires to study the various working groups determined by the technique used in agriculture as a part of the study of the rural population.

Land Relations, Their Role

Next, in the course of the study of the economic life of the rural society, it is vital to understand the land or property relations within the framework of which agricultural production is carried on.

While technique strictly determines the techno-economic division of labour and the resultant number of specific working groups, it does not, as we find from our study of history, always lead to the rise of the same property relations. For instance, the plough was the technical basis of agriculture carried on within the framework of such different land relations as existing in slave and feudal societies. It has also remained the technical basic of agriculture, in modern times, in underdeveloped capitalist societies of countries like India, Burma, Indo-China, and others. Again we find that such advanced techniques as tractors and fertilizers are used in agriculture within the framework of such diametrically opposite types of land relations as capitalist and collectivist which exist in the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union respectively.

Thus, while techno-economical relations based on functional division of labour correspond to the existing technique of agriculture,

land relations or socio-economic relations of production do not always conform to the technique in the form of a single pattern. Hence even when agriculture is carried on with the same plough, we find such varied socio-economic groups as serfs and barons, zamindars and tenants, peasant proprietors, land labourers and others. And, further, when it is worked by tractors and other kinds of modern machinery, even then we observe such diverse groups as wage workers, capitalist landowners, agriculturists who are members of state-owned collective farms and others.

(1) The nature of land relations determines the share of various socio-economic groups associated with agriculture in the total agricultural wealth. For instance, in the zamindari area, the zamindar receives by far the larger share of agricultural income than the cultivating tenant. The staggering dispartity between the colossal income of the former and the meagre income of the latter is basically due to the zamindari type of land relations. Further, the agrarian economy based upon a specific type of land relations has its own logic, its own law of development. Hence we find that the general tendency of the agrarian economic development in the zamindari zone is to accentuate the economic contrast. The cultivating tenant, in spite of a series of reforms, is being increasingly impoverished.

To take another instance, where full-fledged capitalist agriculture exists, a wage worker gets from the capitalist owner of land a wage determined by the state of the labour market.

Thus land relations determine the mode of distribution of the agricultural wealth among the various sections of the rural population just as technique determines the volume of that wealth.

(2) As a consequence of the above, land relations determine the degree of enthusiasm and interest of various groups bound up with agriculture, in the process of production.

For instance, in the zamindari area, the cultivating tenant has meagre incentive to work since he has to surrender a big share of the crop, the fruit of his labour, to the zamindar and his agents. This is in contrast to the peasant proprietor in the ryotwari area, who feels appreciable incenive since he retains the whole product of his labour. However, even in his case, if he feels the burden of land tax and debt too heavy, his enthusiasm for agricultural effort would decline.

(3) Land relations play a decisive role in determining the degree of homogeneity or heterogeneity of the rural population,

In the zamindari area, the rural society is mainly divided into such groups as zamindars, non-cultivating tenants and sub-tenants, and finally cultivating tenants. In the ryotwari area, there are generally peasant proprietors of various grades and landless workers. In the case of large scale capitalist agriculture, there exist such groups as agrarian capitalists, farm managers, technicians, wage labourers and others.

(4) The nature of land relations which determines the share of material wealth of various sections engaged in agriculture thereby also determines the respective specific weight of those sections in the social, political and cultural life of rural society. The class of rich zamindars or capitalist landlords, by virtue of its wealth can have leizure and material means whereby it can establish its hegemony over the life of rural society in all spheres. The mass of poor cultivating tenants or land labourers can hardly have any say in shaping it.

(5) The nature of land relations will also decide the degree of stability and social harmony in the agrarian area. For instance, in the zamindari area, due to the extnsive contrast between the wealth of the zamindars and utter poverty of the cultivating tenants, there will exist a permanent condition of bitter struggle between the two classes. If poverty becomes unbearable, the struggle may even take forms which would undermine the stability of the existing rural society. In fact, contemporary India is rapidly becoming an amphitheatre of such struggles.

If we survey the past and the present history, we find that the rural society has been the arena of numerous struggles which had their genetic cause in the existing land relations. During the French Revolution the serfs wanted to abolish feudal land relations and become free peasant proprietors. The success of the communists in China is also largely explained by their skilful solution of the land problem.

The question of land relations has become the crucial question in all backward countries of the world to-day.

Thus the degree of stability or instability of the rural society is largely determined by the nature of extant land relations.

(6) Wealth is the material means to get access to education and culture specially in modern commodity society. Land relations, by basically determining the share of various agrarian social groups in the total agricultural wealth, therefore, also decide how much scope each of these groups will have for education and culture. Land relations, thus, play a big role in determining the degree of the intellectual and cultural development of various strata of the rural people

and their individual members since this development largely depends upon the education they have received and the culture they have assimilated.

The points mentioned above reveal and emphasize the great significance of land relations in moulding the economic and hence the social, the political, the intellectual, and the cultural life of the rural people.

Standard Of Life

The standard of life of a village community and its sections will indicate the amount of wealth at its disposal and the manner in which it is distributed among those sections. The volume of wealth of the rural community depends primarily on agriculture, and, in final analysis, on the technique used in agriculture since the higher is the technique, the greater is the productivity of agriculture. Land relations determine, as we saw above, the share of various groups comprising rural society in the total agrarian wealth. Yet even where they engender sharp contrasts of wealth among these groups, the absolute share of even the lowest group will be at a high level if the total wealth of the rural aggregate, due to advanced technique of agricultural production, is considerable. For instance, in the U.S.A. where agriculture is mechanized and, therefore, creates great agrarian wealth, in spite of the fact that agrarian capitalists make millions, the income of the wage workers on land is on a much higher level than that of the agriculturist in India.

The problem of the standard of life of the rural population has been keenly studied by eminent sociologists like Sorokin, Zimmerman, Sims, Kirpatrick and others. The criteria and methods laid down by them for such a study can serve as a useful guide to the students of rural society in India.

It is observed by these scholars that the standard of life of the rural people on an average is lower than that of the urban people. This is because the income of the rural people on the average is lower than that of the urban people. "Further the standards of living of the rural population and its various groups (owners, tenants, croppers and labourers) are more homogeneous than those of the urban classes".

It has also been noted that the standard of life of the farmers approximates more to that of the lower strata of the city population.

Though income is the primary factor determining the standard of life of a social aggregate, there are other factors also which in-

fluence it. "To be sure, income may be chiefly responsible for the existence of classes; but wholly apart from material possessions, there are class norms and values dictated by tradition". For instance, in India, the middle class strives to adopt a standard of life according to its own specific conception of life. This is reflected in their choice of food, dress, recreations, cultural amenities and other things. Their standard of life is thus determined not merely by their economic position but also by their specific group outlook, temperament and taste. The role of caste in India as a determinant of the group standard of living demands special study.

It has been further observed that the degree of civilization existing in a society also influences the standard of life of the people. For instance, such institutions as well-furnished libraries, cultural and sport clubs, radio, telephone, cinema and theatre, swimming pools, restaurants and others, do not generally exist in the rural zone of India. Hence the standard of life of the rural people is not affected by them unlike that of the urban people.

However, due to the interaction of the rural and urban societies and the resultant growth of mutual contacts, the rural people are slowly but inevitably influenced by the urban. They begin to develop a predilection and craving for such amenities. They also tend to adopt the food and dress habits of the urban population. Bicycles, modern footwear, games like cricket and football, schools, libraries, cinema, and other things associated with urban life, begin to penetrate the village. This results in gradually modifying the mode of life of the rural people.

In his study of the economic life of the rural people, the rural sociologist needs to study the impact of the more powerful influences of urban life on the rural society and hence on the standard of life of the rural people. Further, he should not take a static view of their standard of life. Human needs are not an immutable entity. They grow from phase to phase.

Rural Poverty, A Crying Problem

A very big section of the rural population has been living in varying states of poverty in all countries. Even in the U.S.A., the most prosperous country of the world to-day, the poverty of a large stratum of rural society has become a crying problem. As Sims remarks, "Although students of rural conditions have long been aware of the existence of country slums and of disadvantaged or submerged classes, such as the share croppers of the south (U.S.A.) no one fully

realised how precarious the lot of a large part of the country population was and how quickly millions could be plunged into a state of destitution until the industrial depression revealed the true situation", and further, "all in all, it is estimated that more than one-third of the rural families of the nation have suffered poverty."

When, as seen above, a large section of the rural population of even such an economically advanced country like the U.S.A. suffers from poverty, it is no wonder that chronic poverty is rampant among the agrarian population in India, an economically much less developed country.

The immense poverty of the Indian agriculturist is proverbial and presents the fundamental problem of the programme of national economic reconstruction.

The principal causes of the rural poverty in India have been, in general, laid bare by eminent Indian economists and sociologists. Primitive agricultural technique, insufficient irrigation system, land fragmentation, uneconomic holdings, overpressure on agriculture, alarming rural indebtedness and, above all, the existing land relations are some of its principal causes.

It is necessary to study the problem of poverty not merely of the rural people as a whole but also of its different strata and, that too, in detail.

Poverty adversely affects not only the health and vitality of the rural people but also explains their backward social and cultural conditions. If the rural people are ignorant, superstitious, uncultured, it is mostly because they are abysmally poor and cannot afford to pay for education. They, thereby, remain excluded from any access to scientific knowledge of the natural and social worlds imparted by educational and cultural institutions.

Economic prosperity is the basic prerequisite for a flourishing social and cultural life. Hence the problem of rural reconstruction at a high social and cultural level is organically bound up with the problem of the eradication of rural poverty.

CHAPTER VIII

RURAL FAMILY

Rural Family, Its Signal Importance

Among the institutions that compose rural society, the family is the most important. It has been its very foundation. It plays a decisive role in the material and cultural life of the rural aggregate and in moulding the psychological characteristics of the rural individual as well as the rural collectivity. In fact, according to some thinkers, family and familism impress their stamp on the entire rural structure. Familism permeates it from top to bottom.

A systematic study of rural family, of its structure, functions, evolution, and interrelations with other institutions of the rural society is vitally necessary for the rural sociologist.

The Indian rural society provides a classic field for the study of the institution of rural family. Within it are found many types and patterns of family organization which humanity has hitherto evolved.

Four Main Patterns Of Family Organization

Prof. Rivers has distinguished four types of institutions which have been designated by the term family, viz. the clan, the matrilocal joint family, the patrilocal joint family and the individual family composed of only parents and minor children.

According to one group of sociologists, these four types reveal four main stages of the evolution of the family form corresponding to four stages in the evolution of society. The first type corresponds to the hunting and food gathering stage of social evolution; the second to the phase of hoe agriculture and the beginnings of domestication of animals; the third—a classic type—to the phase of agricultural economy based on the plough and domestication of animals, and, finally, the fourth type to the modern industrial capitalist phase of human existence. As a result of the growth of market economy in the agrarian area and of the impact of urban socio-economic forces on the rural society, the last type is increasingly becoming predominant to-day.

The Indian rural society provides a great laboratory to test this view, since it includes within its fold the relics of the clan as well as matrilocal and patrilocal family types and the recent individual family group also. A methodical study of the structure and functions of

these various family types and their correlation with the stages of civilization to which they correspond will throw a floodlight on the history of Indian humanity and will enable Indian historians to evolve a correct sequence of the developmental phases of the Indian society.

Patriarchical Joint Family, Its Characteristics

In almost all fully developed agrarian societies depending on plough agriculture, patrairchical joint family has been found to be the predominant family form in rural areas. Outstanding rural sociologists have made a close study of the characteristics of this type of family. They have observed the basic structural, psycho-social, and functional features of this type of the rural family which distinguish it sharply from the urban family. They are as under:

(1) *Greater Homogeneity*: The rural family is far more homogeneous, stable, integrated and organically functioning than the urban family. The ties binding the members of the former, for instance the husband and the wife, parents and children, are stronger and last longer than those in the case of the urban family.

A glance at the Indian countryside will corroborate this view. The Indian village still remains a cluster of joint families though, due to a number of historico-economic causes, the joint family has been exhibiting a tendency of slow but steady disintegration.

The rural family is composed not only of the members of the family but also frequently includes distant relations which hardly happens in the dovecotes of the urban society.

(2) *Based on Peasant Household*: Another essential characteristic of the rural family is that it is generally based on the peasant household. All its members are engaged in the agricultural occupation. Work is distributed among them mainly on lines of age and sex distinctions. "The Community house, common land and common economic functions along with the common kinship bond create the peasant household".

Since the members of the rural family form a single economic unit and constantly co-operate with one another in agricultural operations, since they hold property in common usually managed by the eldest member of the family, since also they spend most of their time together, the psychological traits they develop are very similar.

(3) *Greater Discipline and Interdependence* : The rural family is characterized by greater discipline among its members than the urban family. Further, since there is considerably less state or public pro-

vision for meeting the educational, cultural or social needs of the people in the rural area than in the urban, the rural family attempts to satisfy these needs of its members also. It thus serves as a school, a recreation centre, as well as a maternity or a non-maternity hospital.

(4) *Dominance of Family Ego* : The interdependence of the members of the rural family and the dependence of its individual members on it are, therefore, far greater than in the case of the urban family. This welds its members into a homogeneous, compact, egoistic unit; strengthens emotions of solidarity and co-operation among them; and fills them with family pride. They develop more collectivist family consciousness and less individualistic emotion.

In a rural society, a family is discredited if any of its individual members perpetrates an infamous act. Similarly the glory of his or her achievement also accrues to the family from which he or she springs.

The rural people treasures and frequently protects the good name of the family even with their life.

(5) *Authority of the Father*: Since the rural family is a more integrated and disciplined unit than the urban family, the head of the rural family exercises almost absolute power over its members. It is he who distributes the work of the peasant household among the family members on lines of sex and age differences; arranges marriages of sons, daughters, nephews and nieces; administers the joint family property according to his wisdom; and trains the youngsters for future agricultural work and social life. All initiative and final authority are vested in him. In fact "the head of the family has had the rights and authority to be the ruler, the priest, the teacher, the educator and the manager of the family".

Thus, the rural family, through its head, subordinates its individual members to itself. The latter are completely submerged in the family; hence they hardly develop any individuality or personality.

Such a family type can only be a nursery for the growth of family collectivism but not of individuality.

The urban family in contrast to the rural family, is less authoritarian but also less co-operative. This is due to a variety of reasons. First, it is not a single productive unit administered by the family head since its adult members are mostly engaged in occupations unconnected with and outside home. Further, educational, recrea-

tional and a number of other needs of its members are satisfied by extra-family institutions like school, club, and others. Property of its earning members, too, tends to be individual, since it is derived out of extra-family occupations. In the sphere of marriage also, its members are increasingly exhibiting independence and marry persons of their own choice.

(6) *Closer Participation in Various Activities* : One striking feature of the rural family lies in the fact that its members, being engaged in work connected with the peasant household, spend practically the whole day together. In contrast to this, the members of the urban family engaged in different occupations or being educated outside home, spend only a small portion of the day together. Even their recreational centres such as clubs and others lie outside home. Hence home becomes only a temporary nightshed for the members of the urban family.

Impact Of Urbanization On Rural Family

Rural society has been increasingly urbanised in modern times. In proportion to its urbanization, it exhibits the characteristics of urban society. The rural family more and more develops centrifugal tendencies. Its economic homogeneity based upon a single cumulative economic activity of its members declines. Joint family property tends to be disrupted since its individual adult members begin to demand its partitioning. Being increasingly engaged in different occupations, they earn independent separate incomes which they retain as their own. They live less and less together and spend only a fraction of the day in association. They begin to seek extra-familial centres like clubs, hotels, unions, associations, cafeteria, which are also slowly growing in and around rural areas. All this results in the growth of individualistic psychology among them which weakens family emotion and egoism so vital for the vigorous functioning of a homogeneous family.

The individual hitherto submerged in and subordinated to the family tends to become atomistic. He more and more breaks away from the family restrictions. He develops his own initiative and independence. This inevitably results in the weakening of the family authority, family ties, and the family itself.

Familism, Gestalt Of Rural Society

According to the view of such eminent sociologists as Sorokin, Zimmerman and others, the social and political organization of all

agrarian societies during their subsistence stages bear the fundamental traits of rural family, the basic unit of rural society. These traits they characterize as familism.

"Since the family has been the basic social institution of the rural social world, it is natural to expect that the whole social organization of agricultural aggregates has been stamped by the characteristics of the rural family. In other words all the other social institutions and fundamental social relationships have been permeated by and modelled according to the patterns of rural family relationships. Familism is the term used to designate this type of social organization.....Familism is the outstanding and fundamental trait in the gestalt of such a society."[1]

These sociologists enumerate a number of important characteristics of such societies bearing the stamp of familism. They are as under:

(1) *Marriage Earlier and its Higher Rate* : The members of these rural societies marry at an earlier age than those of urban societies. Further, the rate of marriage in the former is higher than that in the latter.

(2) *Family, Unit of Social Responsibility* : Since family is the unit of rural society, it is the family collective that pays the taxes and discharges social responsibilities. The individual is also appraised according to the status of the family to which he or she belongs.

(3) *Family, Basis of Norms of Society* : Further, ethical codes, religious doctrines, social conceptions and legal norms governing rural societies have always condemned anything which would weaken the stability of the family. They have preached implicit obedience to parents on the part of sons and daughters and to husband on the part of wife.

(4) *Family, Its Impress on Political Form*: The political organizations of those rural societies have been also based on the conception on which rural family rests. Their political ideology has conceived the relation between the ruler and the ruled as that between the head of the family and its members, i.e. paternalistic. "King, monarch, ruler, lord have been viewed as an enlarged type of family patriarch ...the predominant type of political organization in the rural community, is represented by the institution of the village elder, the head, elected by the peasants as the family elder is either openly or tacitly elected by the family members. The whole character of the

[1]Systematic Sourcebook in Rural Sociology, Vol. II, p. 41.

village chief's authority and administration is a mere replica of the paterfamilia's authority and administration".[2]

(5) *Co-operative rather than Contractual Relations*: The relations between the members of the rural society are basically co-operative in contrast to those between the members of the urban society which are preponderatingly contractual. This difference according to the view of the outstanding sociologists, is the result of the difference between the rural and urban families. "In a rural family the solidarity of its members is organic and spontaneous. . . . It springs up of itself—naturally as a result of close co-living, co-working, co-acting, co-feeling and co-believing. Any contractual relationship between its members would be out of place and contradictory to the whole tone of family. . . it is not surprising, then, that purely contractual relationships have been but little developed in familistic societies".[3] The members of the urban family on the other hand have separate interets as well as individualistic psychologies. They have more or less lost collective family feeling. The urban society bears this characteristic of the urban family. Spontaneous co-operation and solidarity-feeling are found to be appreciably less among the urban people than among the rural people.

(6) *Family, Unit of Production, Consumption and Exchange* : The economic structure of the rural society also bears the traits of the rural family. It is based on family ownership. The production and consumption are familistic. The market is less developed. Exchange has more the characteristics of simple barter than of full fledged monetary transactions. The entire code of laws regulating the economic relationships within such a society bears the stamp of familism. In contrast to this, the urban economy is predominantly a commodity economy and therefore the economic and hence the general social relations between the members of the urban society are competitive and contractual.

(7) *Dominance of Family Cult and Ancestor-worship* : The ideology and the culture of rural society also exhibit traits of familism. The cult of family dominates. Religious and other ceremonies have for their object the security and prosperity of the family. Ancestor worship is almost universally prevalent. Even the relationships between its gods and goddesses are familistic, they being related to one another as father, mother, brother, sister, etc.

(8) *Dominance of Tradition* : As a result of all these factors rural society is marked with much less mobility than urban society.

[2]Ibid, p. 46.
[3]Ibid, p. 46.

Tradition severely governs its life processes. It undergoes change with extreme slowness.

Rural Family In India, Its Trends

To sum up, until the impact of the Industrial Revolution and the competitive market economy, familism was the heart of village communities. Subsistence agrarian economies and rural societies based on them were familistic through and through. However, the rise and development of modern industries steadily undermined subsistence agrarian economy and brought the rural economy within the orbit of capitalist market economy. This transformation together with the growing pressure of various urban forces brought about the increasing disintegration of the old rural family. The rural society, too, more and more lost its familistic traits.

In india, due to lack of sufficient industrial development, the forces of urban society have not penetrated rural society to the same extent as in U. S. A., Great Britain and other industrialy advanced countries. The rural family consequently retains its specific traits to a far greater extent in India. Urban industrial development affects the rural family in many ways. It creates new occupations such as those of factory and workshop workers, of clerks, typists, and others. The members of the rural family develop a desire to take to those occupations, demand their share in the joint family property and migrate to towns and cities. This process undermines the joint family based on a common occupation of its members and joint family property, income and expenditure.

Modern industries produce a number of articles cheaply and on a mass scale. They reach out to the village population who purchase them. Thus the peasant family which was formerly producing cloth and other necessities with primitive techniques more and more ceases to produce them now. Thus it loses a number of its economic functions with the result that the scope of the collective labour of its members narrows down.

Capitalist economic development transforms the social and political environments of a people also. In India, British capitalism transformed the socio-economic structure of the Indian society and, further, established a centralized state. This resulted in a number of consequences. Private and state agencies increasingly established schools, dispensaries and administrative and judicial machinery in the village. The rural family which served as the school for its members no longer functioned as such, since its members now began to

receive education outside the family. Also not the grandfather or the grandmother, the embodiment of traditional medical knowledge, but the doctor appointed by an agency unconnected with family now, increasingly treated the members of the family. Caste and panchayat councils were deprived of their functions as guardians of law and dispensers of justice. The customary law was replaced by the new law of the centralized state, which operated through its administrative and judicial organs. The process progressed in proportion as the urbanization of the country advanced.

The historical tendency of the rural family is towards its increasing disintegration and loss of functions. The more this tendency grows, the more the family ego and solidarity feeling cradled in and nourished by the collective labour and life of its members weaken and atomistic individualistic psychological traits develop among them.

During the last hundred and fifty years the traditional joint family and familistic rural framework have been undergoing a great transformation. The shift from status to contract; from the rule of custom to the rule of law; from family as a unit of production to family as a unit of consumption; from family having its cementing bond in consanguinity to family having it in conjugality; from family being an omnibus social agency to that as a specialized reproductive, and affectional unit shorn of most of its economic, political, educational, medical, religious and other social and cultural functions; from a massive joint family composed of members belonging to a number of generations to a tiny unit composed of husband, wife, and unmarried children; has been steadily taking place. Familism, too, gradually drops off and the rural society increasingly assumes quite a different aspect.

A systematic study of the rural family from many angles has never been so necessary as at present in India. Its methodical, intensinve and extensive study will provide proper direction for evolving a programme of appropriate measures to realise grand objectives that are embodied in the constitution of the Indian Union. Rural sociologists in India require to launch a very comprehensive campaign of study to locate the laws of the transformation of one of the most classic familistic civilizations that has emerged in the history of humanity.

CHAPTER IX

CASTE SYSTEM IN RURAL INDIA

Caste System, Its Unique Significance

A very peculiar type of social grouping which is found in India is the caste grouping. A student of the Indian society, who fails to closely and carefully study this variety of social grouping, will miss the very essence of that society. In India, caste largely determines the function, the status, the available opportunities as well as the handicaps for an individual. Caste differences even determine the differences in modes of domestic and social life, types of houses and cultural patterns of the people which are found in the rural area. Even land ownership exists frequently on caste lines. Due to a number of reasons, administrative functions have also been often divided according to castes, especially in the rural area. Caste has, further, determined the pattern of the complicated religious and secular culture of the people. It has fixed the psychology of the various social groups and has evolved such minutely graded levels of social distance and superior-inferior relationships that the social structure looks like a gigantic hierarchic pyramid with a mass of untouchables as its base and a small stratum of elite, the Brahmins, almost equally unapproachable, at its apex. The Hindu society is composed of hundreds of distinct self-contained caste worlds piled one over the other.

The increasing spread of the modern means of communication, the introduction of the British system of administration and laws, and the growth of modern capitalist competitive economy which shattered the subsistence economy of the self-sufficient village community, undermined more and more the functional basis of caste. However the transformation of self-contained rigid castes into modern mobile classes has taken place in a peculiar manner. Certain castes have been monopolizing the position of the privileged upper classes of modern society. Certain castes have been loosing previous status and functions and slowly submerging into the lowest class groups of modern society. This development has created a peculiar social structure in modern India with the result that, within the existing Indian society, class struggles have been often assuming the form of caste-struggles. The student of rural society here is confronted with one of the most complex types of social transformation in the socio-economic as well as in the ideological spheres. The caste system composed

of caste groups in a state of increasing decay and undergoing a transformation into modern classes in a confused way and offering stubborn resistence to it, presents the epic spectacle of a social cyclope writhing in violent death agonies.

Caste Matrix, Essential For Sociological Study In India

One of the most urgent tasks before the student of rural society in India is to evolve an approach which will be able to appraise the social and cultural processes of that society within the matrix of caste structure.

Failure to develop such a perspective has, in spite of an immense accumulation of economic and other factual data, obstructed the elaboration of a living composite picture of rural society. The rural sociologist should concentrate on the following vital problems:

Caste And Economic Life

The economic life of rural society should be studied in context with caste, in its interrelation and interaction with caste.

(1) *Production*: In the field of production the rural sociologist should study the extent to which functional and propertied groups correspond to castes.

Such a study will reveal two facts about rural life. First, it will reveal how far the new economic and political forces have undermined the homogeneous functional basis of old castes and also the distribution of property among them. It will thereby disclose the degree of disintegration and alteration of the status, privileges, and social and political significance of various castes. Secondly, it will enable us to comprehend the attitude of the Hindu as well the Indian Mahomedans too, who are affected by the caste phenomena, towards the hierarchically graded caste structure of society as well as their reaction to the process of change which it is experiencing.

Such a study, for instance, as that of Bhuvel and others, has revealed how in some parts of the Central Gujarat, the Rajputs who owned land are declining in their social and economic status being increasingly supplanted by the Patidars.

(2) *Consumption*: In the field of consumption the rural sociologist requires to study how castes greatly mould the pattern of consumption of respective caste groups. For instance, caste appreciably fixes the food and dress habits or the choice of utensils and other articles of its members. This caste-determined mode of consumption reacts

on and influences production. The pure economic theory of consumption would be misleading and result into incorrect conclusions unless its modification due to the intervention of the caste institution is taken into account.

(3) *Indebtedness*: The rural indebtedness, a striking feature of rural economic life, also requires to be studied in context to caste. Dr. R. K. Nehru has vividly pointed out in his exploratory study of a few villages what close relation exists between caste and indebtedness and credit in the rural area. Certain castes are predominantly composed of members who are almost hereditary debtors; some others of those who are mainly creditors. The rural sociologist should study the social and economic milieu and find out why it is so.

(4) *Habitat*: Caste also largely determines the type of houses its members reside in, their housing habits and the choice of village area where these houses are located. The village is generally divided into areas, each inhabited by the members of a particular caste. Further, even when some members of a caste cease to pursue the caste-determined vocation, they generally continue to reside in the same area and socially interact with other members of their caste.

(5) *Mobility*: Another significant problem which requires to be studied is the co-relation between caste and economic mobility of the rural people. As a result of the operation of the forces of economic evolution of Indian society, a slow but steady and constant interchange of functions among various castes has been taking place. Members of a caste gradually ceases to perform the caste-determined function and take to occupations which other caste groups are engaged in. Further, for the same reason some castes slide down the economic ladder while some castes go up the ladder. Since these changes have an effect on the development of the rural economy and its nature, their specific study is necessary.

Caste And Joint Family Life

The study of the rural society should include the study of how caste and joint family—its two dominant social institutions—influence the social life of the rural individual and the rural aggregate. They are powerful forces determining their social activities and thereby play a big role in moulding their psychology and ideology. As observed elsewhere, a caste in the rural area is generally a cluster of joint families. Hence, the caste moulds the nature of the life of those families.

Caste And Educational Life

Caste also largely determines the attitude of the rural man towards education and even fixes the nature of the education which he intends to receive. A Brahmin child will, due to caste tradition, generally receive education and that too predominantly religious in contrast to the Bania child who will be given secular education and the child of a depressed class who would forego all education. Further, it must be noted that education is not evaluated from the standpoint of individual development or social advance but from that of the caste tradition.

Caste And Religious Life

How religious life is determined rigorously by caste, especially in the rural area, also deserves to be studied. While in cities religious practices are slowly shrinking, in villages they flourish luxuriantly even now. It is the caste that rigidly determines the place of its member in the religious life of the people.

Caste And Political Life

Caste influences the political life to a greater extent in the rural area than in the urban centres. This is because caste consciousness is stronger among the rural people than among the urban people. Choice or rejection of candidates in political elections are determined by caste considerations more in villages than in towns and cities. Caste ego is stronger among the rural people and hence exerts a powerful influence in shaping the political life of the rural aggregate. In contrast to this, extra-caste considerations considerably influence political prejudices and predelections of the urban population.

Caste And Value Systems Of The Community

Since caste largely determines the ideals and patterns of life of the rural social groups, it also considerably shapes the value systems prevailing in the rural society. The value patterns of the rural society bears a far greater impress of caste traditions than those of the urban society where extra-caste institutions and ideologies operate.

Caste And Types Of Rural Leadership

Caste plays a big role in determining the nature and the personnel of the leadership of the rural society. Caste leaders are generally leaders also of the social, economic, political and ideological life of the rural society. As a consequence of this, caste struggles are

often co-eval with social, political, economic and ideological struggles in the rural zone.

The study of the role of caste in the life of the Indian rural aggregate in all its spheres is thus vitally necessary for getting a correct picture of the Indian rural society and its life processes.

Mutual Attitudes Of Caste Groups, Their Significance

It is further necessary to study the actual functioning of the caste and the subjective reactions of its members to that functioning. A proper study of such subjective reactions of different caste groups to the almost all pervasive functioning of caste will enable the rural sociologist to comprehend that fundamental social phenomenon called social distance in the Indian rural society. It will explain the emergence and development of various grades of social superiority and inferiority complexes rampant among the rural people. It will also disclose how those subjective reactions of various groups crystallize as different group psychologies which express themselves in various cultural patterns.

Caste System, A Laboratory To Study Social Distance

The study will also enable him to comprehend what type of consciousness arises out of a social life mainly moving within the caste matrix. It will also aid the rural sociologist in his indispensable study of those socio-historic forces, which across centuries, brought into existence the most complex and elaborate, the most systematised and logically worked out structure of organised and minutely graded group inequality viz. the caste system in India.

The New Constitution And Its Impact On Caste

The problem has acquired a special significance for the contemporary Indian people for a number of reasons. First, the constitution of Indian Union has assumed as its postulate the individual citizen and not caste as the unit of Indian society. Secondly, it has laid down equality of citizens and not hierarchically graded privileges based on the caste as the principle of state legislation. It has chosen as its objective a democratic social order free from inequality and special privileges. Finally, the existing socio-economic structure is also based on the principle of contract between free and equal individuals and not on caste privilege. Individual contract and not caste status is the basis of all rights and responsibilities today.

Caste And Hinduism

This shift from the caste to the individual as the unit of society has brought about convulsive changes in Indian society transforming old social relations. It has been dealing shattering blows to the orthodoxy of Hinduism and the caste social order of the Hindus. The socio-psychological patterns, the religio-ethical norms and even the philosophical outlook of the Hindus determined by the old Hinduism are being increasingly undermined as the process of the transformation of the social relations advances. A democratic conception of social relations in all fields, social, legal, political, economic and cultural is progressively replacing the former hierarchic conception of those relations. A study of the caste and of the process of its steady dissolution today will, further, inevitably make it necessary for the rural sociologist to study the historical genesis of caste and also of the Hindu religion and the Hindu culture which are closely bound up with it. It will also show whether Hinduism can survive as an idealogy without the existence of caste, the social institutional expression and concretization of Hinduism.

A research in the subject of the origin of caste will also require a study of (i) past economic evolution of Indian society which at a certain stage made caste historically inevitable, (ii) its subsequent role as a formidable obstacle to further economic and cultural development of Indian society and (iii) contemporary forces which are steadily undermining caste and, therefore, also probably weakening Hinduism as an ideology and a culture.

Joint Family, Caste, And Village Community; Their Interrelationship

Joint family, caste and village community were the basic social institutions of the pre-British Indian rural society. It is the task of the rural sociologist to study the relations between them.

The process of dissolution of those institutions, however slow, commenced as previously stated, with the impact of British contact after the conquest of India. It must be noted that the autarchic village had been the socio-economic unit of Indian society during the period of agrarian civilization based on a subsistence economy which intervened between the food gathering phase of social existence and the modern phase of competitive nation-scale capitalistic civil society founded on national economy and mobile classes. One unique feature of social evolution in India was that primitive food gathering tribal society was not historically succeeded by a society based on a slave mode of production as in Greece and Rome or by a society based on

a feudal mode of production with serf labour which developed in the Western Europe during the Middle Ages. Slavery or serfdom was never the basis of social production in the long history of Indian society though the phenomenon of slavery might have crept in here and there. Due to complex ecological and socio-historical reasons, primitive collective tribal society seems to have been superseded in India by a unique type of society which persisted for a remarkably long period. It began to disintegrate only after the contact with the capitalist West in modern times.

Extensive historical research dealing with the most remote periods of past history of the Indian people together with the utmost exercise of the power of historical inference guided by a scientific theory of social development, are needed to trace the causes of the genesis of village communities in India. It is necessary to locate the peculiar ecological and socio-historical factors which brought about the emergence of a unique type of social structure based on those autarchic and collectively land possessing village communities in India. Thereafter, it is necessary to probe into the problem whether caste arose as a socio-economic institution adapted to the exigencies of such a social formation.

Doctrine Of Castism And Brahminic Supremacy

The next problem which the rural sociologist should investigate is whether the doctrine of immutable castism propagated by the Brahmins was the inevitable theoretical outgrowth of a society which remained unaltered and stationary for a remarkably long period as a result of unchanging technique and resultant unvarying division of labour. Was it because caste persisted for ages and subsequently became rigid and ossified, that an illusion was generated in the consciousness of the Hindu humanity that it was immutable?

It is also vital to comprehend why the Brahmin caste exercised ideological and social dictatorship over the Hindu people for centuries with rare episodic interruptions like the challenge of Buddhism and a few others? Was it because the Hindu people living in such a stationary society as mentioned above developed an organic predisposition to docilely accept and submit to authority and tradition? Was it, therefore, that they surrendered themselves to the social and ideological sway of the Brahmins who were not only the architect of authoritarian social and religious philosophies but were also the repository and monopolist of whatever scientific knowledge, astronomical, agronomical, medical and other, existed in the past? Even regarding the uncanny forces of nature, they were the Brahmins

who alone were supposed to have the religio-magical power of propitiating and mastering them through rites, incantations and other devices.

Study Of Origins Of Caste, Its Vital Significance

Numerous theories have been advanced to explain the origin, development, crystallization and ultimate petrifaction of the caste system. Most of them have been offered in the spirit of surmises only. The rest, though they have illuminated the problem, have given partial solution of it. A consciously planned out, systematic and still deeper study of the problem of caste, historically and in its complex interconnections with other social developments, has still to be made.

To unravel this problem it is necessary to study the ecological conditions of India in the past, which resulted in the peculiar economic development of Indian society and gave rise to the peculiar type of social formation as the village community. This may provide a valuable clue to the solution of the problem of the origin of caste. Then alone the significance of caste which has played such a powerful role in past Indian society and which is still playing a considerable role in the life of the Indian people in general and the Indian rural people in particular can be fully grasped.

CHAPTER X

POLITICAL LIFE OF THE RURAL PEOPLE

Political Aspect Of Rural Life, Insufficiently Studied

One of the vital problems which requires to be intelligently studied by the rural sociologist is the political life of the rural people. Writers on rural problems as well as social workers in the rural area have generally paid insufficient attention to this aspect of the rural life. They have often presumed that the agrarian population is politically almost an inert mass and have attempted to evolve and work out schemes of better villages on that premise. However, nothing is more unreal in modern times than the hypothesis of the political inertness of the rural people. When we study modern history, we find that the agrarian masses, predominantly composed of farmers, have participated in mighty political movements in a number of countries. For instance, in India, large sections of peasants and artisans supported and joined the great National Revolt of the Indian people against the British rule in 1857. Subsequently peasant struggles like the Deccan Peasant Riots and others directed both against the moneylenders and the government broke out in some parts of the country. In more recent times, increasing sections of the peasantry participated in a series of national political movements like the Non-co-operation Movement of 1919-24, Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-34, a number of political satyagraha campaigns in different districts, Quit India Movement and others. After 1934 the peasant masses even started building their own class organizations like kisan sabhas and launched a number of struggles against the government and landlords. During and immediately after the partition of India, the peasant discontent and restlessness found a distorted political expression in bloody communal carnages which occurred in a number of provinces.

Recent history also records such peasant struggles as took place in Telangana and in portions of Bengal and Assam.

In other countries, too, the agrarian masses have taken part, sometimes even decisive, in political movements. Tens of millions of peasants participated in such world shaking revolutions as the Russian and the Chinese. Large sections of Indonesian and Burmese peasantry also took part in a series of political struggles having national independence as their objective. Peasant masses constituted

the preponderant social force of the resistance movements in France, Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary and other European countries which developed during the period of occupation of those countries by Nazi Germany. Also in recent decades the agricultural populations of Spain, Italy, Latin American countries and others have exhibited considerable political awakening, formed sometimes their own political parties and have launched numerous political struggles.

These events explode the misconception that agrarian population is politically a passive force.

In fact, the growth of political consciousness among peasant populations and their increasing political activity is one of the striking features of the political life of mankind to-day.

The agrarian areas of a number of countries have been transformed into storm centres of militant political activity of the rural people.

Its Study In India, A Vital Need

The following are the two main reasons why it becomes imperative for the rural sociologist in India to study the political life of the rural people to-day:

(1) The Constitution of the now independent India has provided universal adult suffrage to the Indian people. Tens of millions of peasants who constitute the majority of the population thereby acquire a political status. Their will expressed through ballot box would now considerably influence the political life of the nation. This is a unique event in the long history of Indian humanity, for, it is for the first time that the people including the rural masses have secured the democratic right to determine who will rule them. The theory of the divine right of the king or a "providence ordained" imperialist power to rule the people has been ousted by that of the democratic right of the sovereign people to determine their political destiny. Universal adult suffrage serves as a powerful ferment in the life of the rural people making them politically conscious to a phenomenal degree. It is a momentous event in the history of the rural society.

The new situation has posed a number of fresh questions for the rural sociologist. How will the rural people, illiterate, ignorant and superstitious in the main, exercise their franchise? What social, economic, and ideological influences will determine their voting? What types of political organisations will the peasant masses throw up for implementing a programme embodying their conception of a good society by legislative means? What political parties will emerge in the rural area, corresponding to various layers of the

existing stratified rural society? What repercussions will take place in the sphere of social and ideological life of the rural people due to the mass-scale growth of political consciousness and activity among them due to their acquisition of adult suffrage? How will this political equality affect caste and other social as well as cultural and economic inequalities?

The study of these new problems will form an integral part of the study of the Indian rural society.

(2) A proper understanding of the political life of the rural people is necessary also for another reason. Unlike in the pre-British period, the modern state plays a decisive role in determining the life of the rural society. During the pre-British phase, the village, as we have seen previously, was an autarchic and almost autonomous unit. During the British period, it experienced a basic transformation. Its subsistence self-contained economy based on self-sufficient agriculture and artisan industry was undermined.

Further, the British Government established a centralized state with an administrative machinery which penetrated the hitherto autonomous village. This basically changed the political physiognomy of the village. It became a unit of the countrywide political and administrative system.

The consequences of this economic and political transformation were far-reaching. The village population no longer lived an almost hermetically sealed existence but was drawn into the wider whirlpool of the national and international economic and political life. Thenceforward the economic, political, and other problems of the rural community had to be considered in the wider context of national and world politics and economy as well as of the policies of the central government.

Three Main Lines Of Study

A systematic study of the rural political life may be made on the following lines:

(a) The study of the governmental machinery in the rural area.

(b) The study of the non-governmental political organizations in the rural area.

(c) The study of the political behaviour of the rural people and its various sections.

A few observations on each of these are made below:

(a) Govermental Machinery

The study of the governmental machinery can be divided into two parts: (i) the study of the structure of the administration and its functioning within the village and (ii) the study of the administrative machinery of larger units like Talukas, Districts, Regions, and States.

In the pre-British period, when the state did not interfere in the life of the village beyond claiming a portion of the village produce as land revenue and occasionally levying troops, the village administration was carried on by the village panchayat composed of elected or customary representatives of various castes, generally elders of the castes, or by a village headman with the panchayat as the consultative body. The village panchayat was the link between the village population and the higher authority. The panchayat and the headman maintained peace in the village, settled disputes among the villagers, looked after the sanitation and other matters of common concern of the village population, determined and collected the share of the farmer family in the collective land revenue to be paid to the state on behalf of the village, and also regulated the use of collectively owned pasture land and forest area in the periphery. Thus from the standpoint of administration the village was autonomous.

The administrative, judicial, policing, and economic functions of the village were, as seen above, performed by the village panchayat and the headman. So far as the personal, social, and religious life of the village people was concerned, the customary law governing it was operated by various caste councils which regulated the behaviour-patterns of respective castes.

The disintegration of empires did not affect the administrative autonomy and general internal life of the village. This was because the state, even the Imperial state, restricted its intervention in the internal affairs of the village to the mere gathering of the tribute and the levying of the troops generally in war time. The state or the king looked after the inter-village administration and other vital matters affecting the people of the kingdom as a whole such as coinage, irrigation, and the maintenance and development of the network of roads.

With the advent of the British rule in India, as we have stated before, the Indian society began to experience a fundamental economic and political transformation. The new administrative machinery evolved and organized by Britain in India supplanted the old one which had functioned for centuries with little variation. The new state, the organ of British rule in India, stationed its own revenue, judicial, police and other officials in the village. The village lost its administrative autonomy and the caste councils their penal powers. In the new political set up, the village became the basic administrative unit of a hierarchically graded countrywide administrative system.

The local village officials were independent of any control over them by the village population. Thus if the forest had to be cleared, wells to be dug or roads to be built in the village, it was not now the village panchayat which independently and of its own will evolved a scheme and mobilized the village population for implementing that scheme. It was the new village administration, itself a unit of the national administrative system and subject to the latter's control, that decided those questions.

Henceforward the social, political and economic life of the rural people, was largely determined by the state. Village problems became an integral part of the total problems of the nation and could not be solved in isolation by the initiative of the village community.

The character and policies of the government appreciably determined how those problems would be solved and hence what type of life the rural people would live.

After independence, the Indians retained the centralized state apparatus elaborated by the British in India. The rural sociologist needs to study the working of the administrative system inherited from the British in the new national situation. It should be noted that this administrative system had been devised by them as a lever to suppress or restrict the initiative of the people. A critical evaluation of this system from the standpoint of the solution of such problems of the rural population as their general economic advance, universal spread of education, cheap and expeditious justice, awakening and play of the local initiative within the framework of the national plan, and others, has, therefore, to be made and a scheme of reconstruction of the existing administrative system evolved.

The study of the administrative system raises the following problems:

(i) How far the administrative machinery is responsive to the opinions and wishes of the people,

(ii) Whether the people are associated with it and participate in its functioning.

(iii) How far it is cheap, efficient, and sensitive to the problems of the people.

(b) Non-Govermental Political Organizations

It is further necessary to note that the governmental activity is only one aspect of the political life of the village population. Non-governmental political organizations also have emerged and are functioning in the rural area in modern times. Political parties thrown up by the rural people are principal among them.

It is very essential to study the various political parties operating in the rural area. These parties express the specific interests and aspirations of various classes and socio-economic groups composing the rural people such as landlords, tenants, land labourers, peasant proprietors and others. They voice their desire and determination to secure political power and use it to modify or overhaul the existing social system in consonance with their own interests and social objectives. The rural area becomes the arena of struggle between these parties. To have a concrete composite picture of the political life of the rural people it is, therefore, vitally necessary to study closely the ideologies, the programmes and the policies of these political parties and trace their social roots. The general elections recently held in our country on the basis of the new constitution have revealed the extensive growth of political consciousness among the rural people, the expansion of the old political parties and the emergence of new ones in the rural area and, above all, large scale participation of the rural people in the elections. Paradoxically enough, voting in some rural areas even exceeded that in urban zones. Further, large sections even of illiterate peasant women registered their vote, an event of great political significance.

The student of rural society should also study the changing political moods of the rural people and the resultant increase or decline in the influence of different political parties among them. He should further investigate, by means of a sociological analysis, the causes which bring about the rise and fall of political parties in the rural area. He can predict on the basis of such a study the tendency of the development of the political life of the rural people. Such a study is very vital since the victory of a political party in a country implies its capture of state power which it intends to use as an instrument to alter or replace the existing socio-economic structure of

society in the interests of the class or a social group which it represents. For instance, in India, the Socialist or the Communist Party desires to win political power so that it can use it to abolish capitalism and establish socialism. The Hindu Mahasabha aspires for political power to establish the Hindu Raj and reconstruct Indian society in conformity with the Hindu ideals. The Kisan Sabhas and other peasant parties want state power for the purpose of creating a society based on the peasant ownership of land, to create a society wherein the class of zamindars does not exist. The Indian National Congress, the ruling party in India, is working for a society based on a mixed social economy with two sectors, private and state owned, and secular democracy.

(c) Political Behaviour Of Rural People

Another aspect of the rural political life deserving study is the political behaviour of the rural people. The study must be made from two angles.

Programmes

First, the rural sociologist should study the various programmes which various strata of the rural people or the rural people as a whole are striving to fulfil.

These programmes will disclose the basic social aspirations and the immediate needs of the rural people and its various sections. The nature of these aspirations and needs will also disclose the psychologies and ideologies of the rural people and its constituent groups at a given historical moment.

For instance, some decades back, the cultivating tenants in the zamindari tract considered the zamindari system as immutable and merely desired and asked for a humane treatment from the zamindars. Subsequently, increasing sections of them questioned the zamindari system itself and put forth the demand for the abolition of landlords and transfer of land to themselves. They also aspired for a workers' and peasants' Raj which they previously did not even conceive of.

The rural sociologist requires to concentrate special attention on the study of the programme and the political behaviour of peasantry since it constitutes the major section of the rural people and, therefore, would exert decisive influence on the future of the rural society. The peasant movements in a number of countries in recent times have been transforming the entire social, political, and economic landscape in the agrarian area.

Secondly, the rural sociologist should make a thorough study of the methods which the rural people have been adopting to realize their aims.

Methods To Implement Programmes

Different sections of the rural people make use of different methods to implement their programmes at various times.

Indian rural society provides a classical laboratory for the study of a rich variety of these methods. The following are the principal among them.

1. Petitioning.
2. Voting.
3. Demonstrations and marches.
4. Hijrats or mass emigrations.
5. Satyagraha, passive resistance.
6. No-rent and no-tax campaigns.
7. Spontaneous elemental revolts.
8. Organized armed struggles.
9. Guerilla warfare.

Peasant populations in different countries in the present epoch have been employing diverse methods to implement their programmes. In India, too, as previously stated, these varied methods have been used in varying degrees by the agrarian population in different parts of the country in different periods. In the second half of the nineteenth century, a section of the Maharashtrian peasantry took to spontaneous armed struggle known as the Deccan Peasant Riots against moneylenders and the government. Mahatma Gandhi organized a number of no-tax campaigns of the peasantry in various parts of India. Subsequently a series of peasant demonstrations and marches have been organized by the Kisan Sabhas and the Socialist Party of India. In Telangana, a combination of the methods of open armed struggle and guerilla warfare was adopted by the peasantry led by the Communist Party only a few years back.

In the General Election held very recently, the rural population including millions of peasants, men and women, have utilized the method of the ballot box and elected representatives to the State Assemblies and the House of the People who would fight for the implementing of their programmes.

Thus the rural people have used at various times parliamentary as well as extra-parliamentary methods of struggle to achieve their aims and demands.

A sociological analysis of the programmes of the rural people as a whole and its constituent strata as well as of the varied methods employed by them specially becomes necessary in the present period when the agrarian society is in a state of deep crisis and is simmering with great discontent of the rural masses in the major part of the world including India.

Role Of Land Relations In Rural Politics

Since agriculture is the pivot of the rural economy and land is the most important means of production in agriculture, the struggle between the various groups of the rural society has mainly revolved round the question of the ownership of land. As has been almost universally recognized by sociologists and statesmen all over the world, the problem of land relations is the basic problem in all backward or semi-backward countries of Asia and even of some countries of Europe like Spain and Italy. The peasant movements in those countries have had as their basic objective the abolition of feudal or semi-feudal forms of land ownership and transfer of land to the actual tillers.

Struggle over the question of land has, in fact, provided the main dynamic to the political life of the rural society in the present period.

Different sections of the rural people hold different views on the land problems which are determined by their differing specific position in the socio-economic structure of the rural society. The viewpoints of the landlords, the tenants, the land labourers, the peasant proprietors, and the moneylenders and the merchants to whom the peasant debtors have mortgaged their land, vary widely. This divergence of views which expresses divergence of material interests of these groups, is the genetic cause of the economic and political struggles between them, struggles which nowadays form an essential part of the political life of the rural people.

This inter-group struggle among the various sections of the rural people revolving round the land problem has not been adequately and scientifically studied hitherto by the student of the rural society. A historically progressive solution of the land problem is a crucial need since the future of the rural society, its retrogression or further advance, depends upon it.

Political Movements And Caste

In the Indian rural area where the occupational homogeneity of the caste is not still seriously undermined and where caste consciousness among the people remains stronger than in urban centres, caste influences the political life to a much greater extent than it does in towns and cities. In recent times, however, due to the growth of class consciousness among various groups into which the rural population is divided on economic lines, the influence of caste on the political life is slowly diminishing. For instance, non-Brahmin landlords will politically ally with Brahmin landlords rather than with his non-Brahmin tenants since both the Brahmin and the non-Brahmin landlords stand for the defence of landlordism, their common economic interest. Similarly, the Brahmin and the non-Brahmin tenants will more and more come together and form a kisan sabha or a peasant party with the programme of abolition of landlordism and transfer of land to the tillers of land, both Brahmin and non-Brahmin.

In India, where the old caste system of the Hindus still exists and is strong, special attention should be paid to its role in determining political life. Often even when a caste is not occupationally homogeneous and does not, therefore, correspond to a socio-economic group, the caste allegiance amongst its members is so strong that they may politically support caste leaders who belong to another socio-economic group.

It should, however, be noted that, due to historical reasons, the caste and the socio-economic group often correspond to a great extent in various parts of the country. For instance, a good proportion of the farmer-tenants in Maharashtra happen to belong to the non-Brahmin caste while a good proportion of the landlords to the Brahmin caste. Due to this the party of the peasantry has an overwhelmingly non-Brahmin social composition. This often blurs the fact that, judged from the standpoint of the basic aim and demands of the organization, it is the party of a socio-economic group, a class. Caste in this case obscures the class content of the party. The specific weight of caste in the political life of the rural people is still great and the rural sociologist has to assess it carefully.

CHAPTER XI

RURAL RELIGION

Study of Rural Religion, Reasons

A thorough study of rural religion and its significant role in determining the life processes of the rural society should form an essential part of the study of that society. The following are the principal reasons for this:

First, it has been observed by sociologists all over the world that the rural people have a greater predisposition for religion than what the urban people have. The dependence of agriculture—the basic form of production in the countryside—on the hitherto unmastered forces of nature like rains and the near absence of scientific culture, which provides a correct understanding of the natural and social worlds, among the rural people, are two main reasons for the greater degree of religiosity among them. Traditional religion composed of the crudest conceptions of the world holds their mind in its grip. Animism, magic, polytheism, ghost beliefs and other forms of primitive religion, are rampant among the rural people to a far greater extent than among the urban people.

Secondly, the religious outlook of the rural people overwhelmingly dominates their intellectual, emotional and practical life. It is difficult to locate any aspect of their life which is not permeated with and coloured by religion. Their family life, caste life, general social life, economic and even recreational life, are more or less governed by a religious approach and religious norms. Religious conceptions also largely dominate their ethical standards; the form and content of their arts like painting, sculpture, architecture, folk songs and others; as also their social and economic festivals.

This is specially true of societies based on subsistence economies of the pre-capitalist epoch when religion was almost completely fused with social life and when even the then existing secular scientific knowledge of man—physiology, medicine, astronomy, mathematics. agronomy, mechanics, sociology, ethics, etc.—was clothed in religious garb and was the monopoly of the priestly caste.

Thirdly, in societies based on subsistence economies, the leadership of the village life in all domains was provided by the priestly group, in India the Brahmins. Mores, which this group laid down for

the individual behaviour as well as for social control, were determined by the traditional religious concepts. Hence the life of the village aggregate in all spheres was moulded in the spirit of religious ideas and dogmas and was controlled by religious institutions and leaders.

Fourthly, a new development took place in modern times in India after the advent of the British rule. The social, economic and political life of the village, as stated elsewhere, experienced a progressive transformation. The development and spread of capitalist economic forms led to the disintegration of the subsistence economy of the autarchic village. Further, a new and secular centralized state took over the administration of the village from the village panchayat and caste councils whose outlook was essentially religious and who were generally guided by religious conceptions and criteria even in secular matters.

In the new economic and political environs, new norms, basically non-religious and secular and derived out of a liberal democratic philosophy, emerged and began to supersede increasingly the authoritarian religious norms which for ages had governed even the secular life of the village population. The village people for the first time in history felt the impact of secular, and democratic and equalitarian ideas on their consciousness. A new ferment began to spread among them which has been steadily affecting their life and outlook hitherto coloured with religion. Also new secular institutions and associations, new secular leadership and social controls, began to emerge within the rural society.

This has resulted in a slow but steady decline in the hegemony and control of the leaders of religion over the life of the rural population.

It must be noted that, even then, religion still continues to exercise a powerful hold over the mind of the rural people and determine their behaviour in a number of secular fields. However, as a result of the operation of such modern material and ideological forces as modern means of transport like buses and railways and democratic secular ideas, as also due to the growth of secular economic and political movements of the rural masses, the historical tendency, though admittedly very slow, is towards a dereligionizing of increasing sectors of secular life of the rural people as also of their attitude towards purely secular matters.

The contemporary rural society in India has become a battleground of struggle between the forces of religious orthodoxy and au-

thoritarian social conceptions on one hand and those of secular democratic advance on the other. It is essential for the student of Indian rural society to follow this conflict.

Rural Religion *Vs.* Urbanized Religion

Crude forms of religion comprising animism, magic, polytheism, mythology, ghost beliefs and others, which exercise sway over the mind of the rural population, should be distinguished from the refined and subtle types of religion and religious philosophy which are prevalent in cities among the urban intelligentsia. These refined and subtle religions and religious philosophies have been elaborated by great idealistic thinkers out of daring philosophical speculations on basic problems of life such as the problems of the nature of ultimate reality, the genesis of human knowledge and others, which markedly distinguish them from the naive religious beliefs generated in the rural atmosphere.

While rural religion tends to be crude and concrete in form, urbanized religion has tended to be abstract. While the rural population worships and falls prostrate before a multitude of gods and goddesses derived out of their animistic conception of the universe, the cultured educated section of the urban humanity subscribes to the idealistic view of the universe and discusses such categories as the nature of Brahman, Free Will and others.

Further, even critical rationalism and philosophical materialism as minority philosophical currents flourish in urban centres.

The rural sociologist needs to distinguish between the crude, almost static, rural religion and the refined and highly abstract urbanized religion which soars in the stratosphere of speculative thought and grapples with ontological, epistemological and other basic problems of philosophy. Further, he should also note that rationalist and materialist philosophical thought currents as found in the urban society are almost absent in the rural area.

The roots of rural religion lie principally in the great, almost abysmal, ignorance and resultant fear of the forces of environment prevailing among the rural people. Refined urban religion, even if based on the erroneous idealistic interpretation of the world, is not born of mere fear. This distinction regarding the psychological roots of rural and urban religions is important.

Three Aspects Of Rural Religion

The rural religion should be studied in its following three important aspects:

1. Rural religion as providing a specific world outlook, a specific view of the universe;
2. Rural religion as prescribing a body of religious practices to the rural people; and
3. Rural religion as an institutional complex.

Each of these three vital aspects of the rural religion needs a few observations.

1 As A World Outlook

The world outlook provided by the rural religion includes such ingredients as (*a*) magical conceptions, (*b*) animism, (*c*) the conception of a bizarre world peopled by spirits, (*d*) the conception of a posthumous world of dead ancestors who have to be worshipped, and (*e*) mythology.

The most striking feature of the rural religion is its diamonic conception of the universe i.e. the conception of the universe as a theatre of the interplay of conscious freely acting elements. The rural religion unfolds such worlds as *PITRULOK, PRETLOK, DEVLOK,* and *VAIKUNTH DHAM* i.e. the worlds of dead ancestors, disembodied spirits, gods and goddesses, as also the celestial world. It also, in addition, conjures up worlds peopled by such deities as those of fertility, various epidemics, rivers and forests. In fact, the rural religion sees spirits practically behind all phenomena and creates a phantasmagoria of numerous uncanny worlds of spirits.

Such a world outlook is fundamentally born of the profound ignorance of the forces of nature and of the nature of man. Ignorance breeds fear and these two are the interrelated twin sources of the world outlook fashioned by the crude rural religion.

Since the world outlook, consciously or unconsciously, largely determines the social, ethical and other views of the individual and the social aggregate as well as their behaviour, its study forms an indispensable part of the study of the rural society.

2 As A Body Of Practices

The body of religious practices prescribed by the rural religion is imposing. These practices may be divided into the following three groups:

(*a*) *Prayers.* The individual is enjoined to offer prayers to various deities at home as well as outside home. At home he is required to pray to the family god or goddess. The prayers are offered by the members of the family at the family altar.

Every caste generally worships a special deity and maintains, if possible, caste temples where the deity is installed. All members of the caste are exhorted to regularly offer prayers to the deity, a god or a goddess.

Further, every street or locality in the village has its own deity, generally a goddess, *MOHOLLA MATA* to whom the people residing in the locality has to offer prayers, specially during the *NAVARATRA* religious festival.

There is also the village temple in which the village god is installed. Community prayers have to be offered to him.

Further, prayers are offered also to the river goddess if the village is situated on a river, to the forest deity and to other deities of the locality.

In addition, prayers have to be offered also to some or all gods and goddesses common to all Hindus.

The prayer and worship aspect of the rural religion deserves a careful study because, in recent times, sections of the Hindus—the depressed classes—, who were denied the right of temple entry, organized a number of struggles to secure that right. The issue of the right to enter public temples and worship and offer prayers to deities even became a political issue.

(*b*) *Sacrifices.* The rural religion prescribes a variety of sacrificial acts to its adherents, which range from the sprinkling of some drops of water and scattering of leaves or grains in front of various deities to the offering of animal and, though rarely, even of human sacrifices to them. The rural religion is composed of various sub-religions and each sub-religion prescribes to its followers a particular set of sacrificial acts.

Sacrifices are offered to a variety of gods and goddess. There are the food good (*ANNADEVATA*), the gods of different diseases (*BALIAKAKA AND OTHERS*), the rain god, the river goddess, and a plethora of others. Sacrifices are offered to propitiate them and thereby disarm their wrath or win their favour.

A sociological analysis of scarifices is valuable for comprehending the conceptions of the rural people of the causes of diseases, floods

and other devastating phenomena. It can also provide a clue to their social habits and styles of living. It will reveal their attitudes to the world and life. It may assist the rural sociologist to grasp how various castes practising different kinds of sacrificial acts, thereby, develop a hierarchic conception of the caste series. Such a study can further help him to explain certain psychological and cultural traits of different social groups. And finally it may aid him in tracing the past history of Indian society, social, economic and cultural, of which the concept and practice of sacrifices were an organic outgrowth. Sacrifices to particular deities have a specific character and hence presupposes a specific concept of each deity. Those deities were born in the field of human consciousness at a certain stage in the socio-economic development of society. Mythology, in fact, is the history of society in terms of symbolism and since society changes, the pantheon of gods and goddesses too changes.

The rural society has at present become the amphitheatre of the struggle between the conservative and the reformist religious tendencies and movements. The conservative social groups strive to preserve old religious practices while the reformist social groups are characterizing those practices as irrational and mentally deadening. They counsel a rational approach to problems of life. A study of sacrifices becomes essential if one were to properly understand this struggle, particularly because they play a very significant role in the life of the rural people. The culture of the rural people is predominantly religious and sacrifices also form the theme of the rural folklore which constitutes the major part of their culture.

(*c*) *Rituals.* One of the significant features of the life of the rural people is its meticulous domination, even in details, by rituals. The conception of purity had been elaborated in the past Indian society to such an extent that it became a veritable principle. Rituals are the religious means by which the purity of the individual and the social life becomes guaranteed. The inherited rural religion prescribes a complex pattern of behaviour for the individual as well as for various social groups in all spheres of life, complex because rituals are associated with their numerous significant and even insignicant activities. Particular sets of rituals are dictated to a particular caste or sub-caste groups so much so that distinct differences in the respective rituals which those social groups and sub-groups follow enable one to distinguish them from one another. Social condemnation and even the threat of excommunication provide sanction for the strict enforcement of rituals among their members.

Rituals are associated with most of the life activities of the rural people. A ritual is prescribed whenever the individual or the social group initiates an activity even though the activity may be, like food-taking, repeated in future. Before an individual Brahmin starts consuming the food in the dish, he is required to draw a magic circle round the dish and apportion some grains of cooked rice to the god or gods. There are rituals prescribed for a number of such ordinary mundane and secular activities. There are the bath ritual, the occupational ritual, the ritual to be performed when a person occupies a residential premises. There are seperate rituals when the farmer begins sowing and harvesting. All landmarks in the process of agricultural production have been associated with specific rituals.

Rituals have been prescribed for auspicious days and also for the start of a new season. When a child for the first time goes to the school, there is also a ritual to be performed.

In fact, the life of the rural human is a succession of rituals corresponding to a succession of activities he is engaged in from morning to night, from month to month and year to year, almost from birth to death. Even the dead person is not to be left alone. Specific rituals have to be performed in the posthumous period for some days.

In fact, we may remark that it is very difficult to locate in the Hindu society where religious observances end and secular practices begin.

3. As An Institutional Complex

The Hindu religion, which a preponderant section of the rural population subscribes to, is a conglomeration of numerous sub-religions and religious cults.

A number of these sub-religions and religious cults have been institutionalized. Corresponding to these institutionalized sub-religions and religious cults there exist a number of religious organizations.

Some of these religious organizations function on a national scale, some on the provincial and others on the local basis. They maintain Maths, Ashrams and temples where their adherents flock to worship and pray to various deities as also to listen to religious discourses.

These religious bodies own property, often substantial. They maintain a permanent staff of priests and preachers who spread the

doctrines of their respective sub-religions and religious cults among the people.

Thus we have in the country such religious organizations as those headed by Shankaracharya, decendants of Ramanuj, Vallabha, Sahajanand and others, all differing again in subtle points of philosophy and rituals.

Some of the sub-religions and religious cults have not been institutionalized. Their protagonists and preachers have not been integrated into regular organizations.

The absence of state religions has been one striking characteristic of religion in India. This is in contrast to Christianity or Islam which became state religions in a number of countries of Europe and Asia. Religion in India was considered the concern of the community and not of the state. The religious organization was always distinct and separate from the state though a Hindu or a Muslim king might favour and support his respective religion.

In Europe, as history records, it was otherwise. There existed, in the Middle Ages, Catholic and subsequently Catholic and Protestant states. Till Kamal Pasha separated the state from religion, Turkey was a theocratic Muslim state.

Hence we do not find in Indian history such struggles as between the Pope, the head of the organized international Catholic religion, striving to maintain a system of Catholic states and Henry VIII who rebelled against Catholicism and transformed the English state into a Protestant one.

One significant feature of the life of Indian society in the past lay in the fact that great democratic mass movements look the form of religious movements led by outstanding religious leaders popularly known as Bhaktās (Saints). Since religion was a community and not a state matter in India these movements were not directed against the state (in contrast to protestantism in Europe) but aimed at winning over the people to their programmes and, through their initiative and action, bring about the reform of society.

The popular democratic character of those Bhakti movements is evidenced by the fact that they generally stood for democratization of the Hindu sociey (liquidation of castes or caste inequalities) and for equal access to God and religious culture by all, including women, without the intermediacy of the priestly Brahmin caste. Further the Bhaktas developed the vernaculars or the languages which the

common people knew and spoke and themselves created a vast literature in those languages. Thus they also brought culture to the common people.

It must, however, be noted that a Hindu, a Buddhist or a Muslim king would often utilise his state power and state resources for the extension of the particular religion he subscribed to. The state, however, had not a Hindu or a Muslim character. Religion was not a department of the state.

We will next refer to the group of men exclusively devoted to religion. This group can be divided into two categories, priests who have a fixed domicile and sanyasis who travel from place to place.

There are various kinds of priests. There are family priests who serve the religious needs of the family; the caste and sub-caste priests who cater to the needs of various castes and sub-castes; and the village priest who looks after the village temple and meets the religious requirements of the village community as a whole.

These priestly groups exercise a powerful influence over the life of the rural people, both religious and secular, since secular life processes are coloured by religion and, before being undertaken, require to be hallowed by religion through rituals. Religion is even now largely interwoven in the texture of the secular life of the rural people.

The historical tendency, however, is towards a decline of the domination of the secular life of the rural people by the priestly group.

There are, in our country, in addition to priests, a large number of roving religious men (*Sanyasis*) who mostly tour in the rural area. Some of them are preachers of the religious cults to which they belong. Others are just holy men who hallow the village by their visit and deign to taste the hospitality of the villagers for a while.

Significance Of Temple In Rural Area

We will next evaluate the role of the village temple in the life of the rural people. This is because the temple has not only functioned as a place of worship and prayer but also has served as the main centre and initiator of village activities. It plays a significant part in the village life even to-day.

The temple has been associated with education in the village. For ages it maintained a school where the village youngsters of higher

caste received religious and secular education. It organized for the village people religious discourses as well as Kathas narrating the past history of the Indian people.

The temple did philanthrophic and social welfare work in the village. It collected money and goods from the villagers with which it used to bring relief to the needy among them.

The temple organized collective social and religious functions. Under its auspices marriages were performed, social and religious festivals including village dinners were organized, and significant days like the New Year's Day were celebrated. In fact, a good proportion of the collective life of the village, religious and secular, moved round the temple.

The temple also embodied and was the guardian of all traditional culture, literary and artistic. Sometimes it even attached to itself and maintained singers, dancers and musicians. It must be borne in mind that the past culture was largely religious and even its secular part was clothed in the religious raiment. Hence this inherited culture was associated with and guarded by the temple. Thus the village temple became the predominant centre of village culture; and the cultural life of the village, religious and secular, artistic and literary, moved round the temple.

The temple was the source of ethical values which regulated the life of the village people. The head of the village temple was the inexorable moral critic and controller of the actions of the villagers, though in recent times the control has been diminishing.

The temple played and also plays to-day an important role in the economic life of the village. All turning points in the process of agricultural production such as sowing, reaping, and others are signified by religious rituals. When an artisan starts his occupation, there is the inevitable ritual linked with the event. The temple through its priestly representative hallows the farmer's plough and the artisan's instruments, when they are first put to use, by means of appropriate religious rituals. Thus, the temple, the visible expression of the rural religion, plays an important role also in the economic life of the rural society.

The temple occasionally dispenses justice too. It adjudicates disputes between villagers with the authoritative voice of religion. It prescribes religious methods of expiation for even heinous secular offences.

Not only that. The temple further makes forecasts of future events through the priestly representative.

The temple serves as a social centre also. Even village gossip is largely carried on within the precincts or the periphery area of the temple.

Public meetings are generally held near or in the temple since it is the most significant and spacious place in the village.

The temple provided largely in the past and provides to a less extent now, teachers, physicians, medicine men, ethical leaders, songsters, experts in narrating past history before village audiences (*Kathakars*), scribes, astrologers, astronomers, and soothsayers to the village.

There is a rich variety of temples in the village. There are caste and sub-caste temples as well as temples consecrated to deities worshipped by the village people in common with the entire Hindu community as a whole. There are also temples for the worship of deities of specific religious cults like the *Shakti* cult and others. There are, further, temples where local village deities are enshrined.

Some of the village temples are owned publicly; others are owned privately.

Need To Study Rural Religion

We have now briefly surveyed the rural religion.

The study of contemporary rural religion is very essential for having a composite picture of the past cultural evolution of the Indian people. The history of Indian culture is still scrappy, is still in a fragmentary state. A controversy is still going on regarding the genesis of Indian culture and further phases of its subsequent development. Varied views have been advanced on the subject. Also problems such as, where the Indian culture originated and how it spread in different parts of India, also remain in the domain of debate.

Need To Study Regional Rural Religions

A study of various rural religions in various rural regions of India reveals certain common characteristics such as common patterns of gods and goddesses, common objects of worship, common rituals as well as almost common religious conceptions and myths. A number of these characteristics, however, exhibit regional variations.

Further, a regional rural religion also possesses features which are distinct and its own and which it does not share with others.

This discloses two striking facts. First, the common characteristics of these rural religions indicate that they had their origin in a common Indian culture in the past and, in spite of regional variations, constitute a varied pattern of a single Indian rural culture even to-day. Secondly, in spite of common ancestry they are also distinct rural religions of various rural areas since they possess certain independent traits and elements.

A careful sociological analysis of this rich diversity of contemporary regional rural religions will assist to trace their evolution. It will, further, help to discover the genesis of these rural religions which spread along with great and frequent migrations of peasant communities from one part of India to others.

Even the varied geographical conditions of India have played a big role in determining the Indian rural religion and its regional variations. Mighty rivers, moutainous territories, decisive trade routes, have influenced the character and content of those religions. The spread of modern railways, which have greatly neutralized the topographical and geographical factors in conditioning the cultural life of the people in modern times, makes it difficult for us to comprehend the significance of these factors in shaping the past Indian culture.

An inventory of the various religious beliefs, rituals and pantheons of gods and goddesses of various regional rural religions and a study of their common characteristics as well their regional variations will help to evolve a scientific history of the Indian rural culture as it developed and spread for many centuries.

The study of the Hindu rural religion is particularly fascinating because of the rich variety of its content. Hinduism is a colossal diversified complex of religious beliefs and rituals. In its contemporary form it is an aggregate of religious dogmas and practices almost of all phases of development of human society.

Study Of Rural Religion, Aid To Evolve Scientific Indian History

Further, a sociological investigation into Indian rural religion will disclose, though in symbolic form, the past social, political, economic and ethnic history of India. It will unveil the history of economic and other clashes as well as of various social, political and cultural amalgamations of conflicting social groups in the past.

This is because the shadow world of religion reflects the real movement of society.

The studies of Egypt, Babylonia, Greece and other countries by eminent scholars like Moret, Maspero, Breated, Frankfort, Gordon Childe, Thomson and others have shown how a systematic study of the evolution of gods from tribal totems and fetishes to national pantheons unfolds the process of the transformation of tribal society into territorial political society. A study of the ideology and mythology of the rural religion in India may also unlock the secrets of changes in the Indian society in various stages of its evolution.

The rural sociologist in India has to study such problems as to why *Shaivism* spread in certain parts of India, how *Vaishnavism* spread in certain regions, why the *Shakti* cult took various forms in various zones, and others. Migrations of gods and goddesses signify the migrations of peoples too. Fusion of gods and goddesses reveals the historical process of the fusion of peoples. The hierarchy of gods and goddesses and the branding of some deities as villainous and extolling of others as beneficent, unfold, though in mythological terms, struggles among races and peoples and the subordination of some to others in real historical conflicts.

It must be noted that, in addition to Hinduism which we have extensively discussed on account of its preponderance, other religions also have existed in the Indian rural society. It is, therefore, also necessary for a rural sociologist to make their study on similar lines for a thorough assessment of the role of religion in the life of the rural people.

Rural Religion Under The Impact Of Modern Forces

Further, the study of the rural religion is also very vital because, due to the impact of modern economic, social, political and rationalist forces, the rural society is experiencing a transformation, however, slow, in the present period. The transformation is taking place in all spheres of rural life including the sphere of rural religion. The ideology, the institutions, the rituals, the ethics, and the esthetics of the rural religion are undergoing a change, though gradual, under the pressure of new material and cultural forces. It is the task of the rural sociologist to study this process to be able to predict the future of the rural religion which exercises a great sway over the mind of the rural people and the life processes of the rural society.

CHAPTER XII

RURAL EDUCATION

Education, Its Significance In Modern Times

The significance of education in modern societies cannot be overestimated. A literate and educated people are a prerequisite both for maintaining and further developing these societies. The crucial need of education for the people in various spheres of modern social life (economic, political, social, ethical and others) has been unanimously recognized. We will see why this need arises.

1 Economic Reasons

In contrast to the multitude of self-sufficient village economies which mainly constituted the economic life of the pre-modern communities, the economy of a modern people has a national basis. Not only that. Even this national economy has been largely outmoded in recent decades and has become an integral part of the single world economy. The national economy, in fact, produces industrial, agrarian and other commodities both for the national and international markets. Consequently, it is the world price movement of various commodities which finally determines the volume and the price of products in different production centres. An intelligent and correct understanding of the complex economic life of mankind as a whole therefore becomes necessary for all producers.

It was not so in pre-modern societies. In pre-British India, as observed earlier, the village farmer group produced just enough to meet the requirements of the village population and of the land revenue to be paid by the village collectivity to the state. In post-British India the village farmer group has been producing for the local, national and even international market. If the village agriculturist is not to be a victim of the vicissitudes of the world market, he needs to be educated enough to follow the movement of national and world economies.

2 Political Reasons

Education is necessary for the modern rural aggregate also for political and administrative reasons. Formerly, as mentioned before, the state exercised nominal sovereignty over the village. Its administrative machinery did not penetrate and function in the village. The village panchayat and caste committees regulated the life of the people. After the modern society evolved, the village has become

an integral part of the political and administrative machinery of a highly centralized state. Since the modern state appreciably shapes the economic, social, and cultural life of the people, it is indispensable for the rural people to study its mechanism. The rural man needs to know a minimum of law, governing judicial and administrative processes as well as powers of various state organs. Further, in recent decades, various political parties have sprung up in the rural area. These parties struggle among themselves to win the support of the rural people with a view to gain control over the state. It is, therefore, also necessary for the rural people to study the programmes and policies of these political parties. Both these reasons make it obligatory for them to have education.

3 Social Reasons

Education is essential for the rural people also for the broad social reason viz. that all social relations between citizens are, in the modern society, governed by the principle of contract and not by status as in the former epoch. Contractual social relations are complex and multifold demanding from the citizen an understanding of the basic structure of the modern society and hence this need for education. The economic relations between citizens, the relations between the members of the family and other types of social relations, which in their totality form the complex variegated pattern of the modern society, are governed by laws based on the principle of contract. Only an educated citizen can have a comprehension of such a diversified system of contractual relations.

4 Ethical Reasons

There is another reason why the rural man must be an educated man. In the modern society, the ethical life of the individual as well as of the social aggregate is increasingly being based on secular and humanist instead of on religious principles as in the medieval society. Equality of all men, individual liberty, development of human personality, reason as the determinant of human conduct—such are some of the principal conceptions which have been progressively determining the behaviour of the individual and the social aggregate. Modern education is absolutely necessary to comprehend these basic conceptions.

5 Cultural Reasons

Education is also the prerequisite for the study and assimilation of the rich culture which has developed in the contemporary age. Human knowledge of the natural world has registered a phenomenal

advance in modern times, giving man a greater mastery over nature. Similarly knowledge in the sphere of social life too has immensely grown, thereby enabling man to mould his collective social life more consciously. Further, there has been a tremendous advance in the field of artistic culture also. A part of this rich modern culture has even acquired the character of a world culture. Education is indispensable for assimilating this mighty world culture so vital for enriching the intellectual and emotional life of the individual and thereby increasing his capacity to contribute to the advance of society. The best part of modern culture lays strong emphasis on individual liberty and social co-operation both of which are so essential for the development of the individual's personality and powers and for social progress. The citizen who imbibes such a culture will feel an inevitable urge to work for the creation of a society free from social antagonism and discord and based on social solidarity and individual freedom.

6 Other Reasons

For the agriculturist, education is, in addition, necessary for understanding of the advantages of the use of such advanced agricultural techniques as tractors, fertilizers, harvesters and thrashers.

It must be also noted that the modern society throws up specific problems which only modern knowledge can successfully solve. For instance, the economic or political science embodied in *Arthashastra* by Chanakya cannot aid in solving the economic and political problems emerging from the soil of contemporary society. And modern education is the only means to acquire modern knowledge.

Just as old knowledge cannot assist in solving modern problems, educational methods of gaining old knowledge cannot help to assimilate modern knowledge. Modern science of pedagogy, modern methods of instruction and modern schools are required for imparting modern knowledge.

A shockingly large portion of the Indian rural population is submerged in gross ignorance and illiteracy. The problem of transforming tens of millions of those illiterate rural humans into educated and well-informed citizens is a problem of herculean proportion and still has to be resolved if the Indian society is to advance materially and culturally.

Education In Pre-British India, Its Basic Features

We will first delineate the main features of the education in the pre-British Indian rural society based on subsistence economy.

Education in the agricultural, industrial, and other occupational arts was imparted to the members of the growing young generation not in schools but in the process of their direct empirical participation in those occupations under the guidance of family elders.

Social education or education in the arts of social behaviour and adaptations was imparted to them by the family and the caste as the social life of the village people mainly moved within the family and the caste matrix.

The growing young generation received its moral and intellectual education largely from the priests, the Kathakars and saints, and, also, to some extent, from the family.

The multitude of secular and religious functions, festivals and celebrations, which the family, the caste, and the village community organized and in which the youngsters of the village participated, served as the school for the aesthetic education of those youngsters.

We will next briefly review the basic content of the old rural education.

The world outlook inculcated by that education was fundamentally religious. It propagated the concept of the divine origin of the world and of God's free will determining all phenomena and happenings. In addition to one supreme God it also taught the belief in a pantheon of gods and spirits behind all phenomena, significant and insignificant. Eclipses and earthquakes, floods and epidemics, were not scientifically explained but were declared to be the result of the wrathful actions of melevolent gods and goddesses. For instance, the eclipse signified the temporary suppression of the Sun-God by the two demons, *Rahu* and *Ketu*. The earthquake was the consequence of the movement of *Shesh Nag* who supports the earth on its colossal hood. The eruption of small-pox was the result of the ire of the deity *BALIA KAKA* who, therefore, had to be propitiated by a proper ritual. Education, then, also encouraged belief in animism, in tree gods, mountain gods and river goddesses.

Thus the rural people of the pre-modern society had a religious unscientific conception of the world.

The history of the past Indian society taught to the young generation was largely mythology. It dealt with the superhuman feats of god-kings. Even gods participated in the terrestrial battles between these god-kings. Such a history could not give a consistent continuous account of the development of the social, economic and political life

of the people in the past and explain all historical transformations by means of secular causes.

The social education adapted the individual to the exigencies of joint family, caste and village communal life. Since the social structure was authoritarian, the social education was authoritarian in spirit too. It exhorted the individual to completely subordinate himself to the joint family, the caste or the village community. It disciplined him in the service of these institutions. Such a social education could hardly serve individual liberty or help the development of human personality.

All education including agricultural and craft education consisted of empirically acquired and hereditarily transmitted body of knowledge from the past. It was imparted to the young orally, mostly in the process of practice in arts, crafts and agriculture and participation in social life. There did not exist any technical institutes, musical and other art academies or schools of social sciences in the village. It was only in some distant urban centres that some educational and training institutions existed and functioned.

Education Under The British Rule, Its Chief Characteristics

Impact with the west in general and Britain in particular and the resultant rise of modern society in India led to the spread of modern education among our people.

The new education was essentially secular and, on the whole, liberal in spirit and content. This signified a shift from the religious and authoritarian to secular and liberal character of education. The spread of the modern education was, however, extremely slow and mainly restricted to middle and upper strata of the urban society. Very few villages had schools, and, even where they existed, the stark poverty of the rural people made it impossible for them to take advantage of the educational facility due to high cost. Further, since the modern education was introduced in India by the British mainly to meet the need of the personnel for their administrative machinery and economic enterprises, its liberal aims remained hazy or were even distorted. It did not set to itself the ideal of turning out citizens armed with modern knowledge who would use that knowledge for the untrammelled material and cultural advance of the nation to which they belonged. It was bereft of nationalist spirit and ideals. Nevertheless, it must be recognised that in spite of these serious flaws, the introduction of the new education brought the Indian people in contact with the liberal, democratic and rationalist ideologies of the

modern west. Supersession of the pre-British education, authoritarian in spirit and largely superstitious in content, by the modern education, however defective, was an event of great significance in Indian history. Radhakrishnan's University Commission Report vividly depicts the achievements as well as the limitations of the system of modern education introduced during the British period.

As we have stated before, the benefits of the modern education hardly extended to the rural India. The problem of education in the rural area was almost completely ignored by the British as is evidenced in the fact that, even after a hundred and fifty years of the British rule, 86% of the total Indian population, including its advanced urban section, still remained illiterate.

A number of agencies worked for the spread of the modern education in India. The British Government, various foreign missionary bodies, Indian social reform organizations and subsequently political institutions like the Indian National Congress, were the chief among these agencies.

All these agencies, however, failed to achieve any appreciable result in the rural area.

Even the problem of rural education, it must be said, was not thought out in all its complexity.

4. Finance and Personnel.

Problems Of Education In Independent India

With the advent of national independence, the problem of rural education has assumed urgent importance and new significance. The free Indian people have set to themselves the task of building up of a democratic, progressive, national life, which surely cannot be achieved when tens of millions of rural people are illiterate, ignorant and superstitious.

Campaign against the mass illiteracy among the rural people is the urgent task to-day. Further, treasures of rich modern knowledge have to be brought within their reach if they are to be effective participants in the creative work of national reconstruction.

For successfully evolving a comprehensive and scientific programme of rural education a number of problems germane to it have to be resolved. We enumerate these problems below:

1. Objctive of Education.
2. Structure of the Machinery of Education.
3. Technical and other Means for its Spread.
4. Finance and Personnel.

1 Objective Of Education

It is now recognized by eminent educationists that the present system of urban education lays unduly greater emphasis on the training of intellect than on the development of the physical, emotional, and moral aspects of the pupil's personality. Such education results in the one-sided and therefore defective development of the young generation. It fails to evolve an integral human being with an all-sided development of his personality.

The present system of urban education is further criticized on the ground that, during the long period of schooling which extends from childhood to almost adulthood, the role of general knowledge is overemphasized. It is not related to concrete problems of real life. Consequently the educated youth, when he enters the arena of life after completing education, finds it difficult to grapple with the concrete problems of real life.

Various views have been advanced in the field of controversy over the question of education.

There are some who emphasize that education must have the liberal and humanist ideal before it. Others lay greater stress on the technical and practical aspects of education.

There are some who declare that the basic aim of education should be the development of the individual's personality. There are others who give greater importance to the cultivation of the virtues and qualities of an ideal citizen in the pupil.

There are some who desire secular education to be reinforced by religious training. There are others who sharply disagree with this view and uncompromisingly stand for purely secular education.

There is a group of educationists who are the exponents of a synthetic type of education which would help the development of all sides of the pupil's nature, intellectual, emotional, moral and social, and help him to evolve into a synthetic man.

The view is gaining ground among a large number of social thinkers that the present education, which at the lower level, concentrates on the three R's, thereby concerns itself only with the development of the intellectual side of the pupil. They recommend that, instead of this, education should focus on three H's i.e. education of hand, heart and head. This will guarantee, they observe, the all-sided development of the pupil. Such education will result into the emergence of citizens, physically healthy and strong, emotionally rich,

intellectually alert and capable of social co-operation. They will be valuable assets to the society.

The new Constitution of the Indian Union has stated in its preamble that it aims at creating a democratic society based on "justice, social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and opportunity". Further it aims at promoting among all citizens "Fraternity, assuring the dignity of the individual and unity of the Nation".

It implies the creation of a society free from all forms of inequalities and exploitation and based on individual liberty and social solidarity and co-operation.

For the realization of such an objective, it is necessary that the conception and the programme of education should be in harmony with and be derived out of it.

In his University Education Report, Dr. Radhakrishnan has given an elaborate picture of the social ideal depicted in the Constitution and has further described how it should be paraphrased and expressed in terms of the educational ideal of the nation.

Reconstruction of the Indian society as a whole in the spirit of the great social ideal embodied in the Constitution would imply also the reconstruction of the Indian rural society in the spirit of the same ideal. Rural education should be therefore adapted to the needs of creation of the new and higher type of rural society envisaged in the future.

The study of a society reveals that the prevailing system of education serves the needs and ideals of that society. The educational system of a society based on self-sufficient economy serves the needs and ideals of that society. Similarly the present educational system subserves the requirements of the existing capitalist society based on a competitive and market economy and its social ideals.

A new educational system will have to be evolved if a new society based on co-operative socio-economic relations is to be created. It will have to instil virtues of social solidarity and social co-operation in the members of the young generation, uproot anti-social individualism, infuse social passions, and build up the ability for social co-operation among them.

The type of rural society which is programmed for construction should determine the educational system to be elaborated for the rural people.

The rural sociologist has to give most earnest attention to this fact while making suggestions for a new system of education for the rural people.

2 Structure Of The Machinery Of Education

The success of an educational scheme like that of all schemes depends upon the machinery evolved for implementing that scheme. The scheme may be scientific and adapted realistically to social conditions and, further, the social ideal conceived by it may be noble, yet, if the appropriate machinery for its implementation is not forged, it will meet with failure.

The task of elaborating the organizational machinery for a scientific and comprehenhive educational plan for millions of illiterate and ignorant villagers is a stupendous task. This is obvious when we consider that even the problem of creating a machinery for carrying out the minimum programme of the abolition of illiteracy among the rural people presents formidable obstacles.

The task raises a number of problems. What type of primary schools should be established for children? How will they be coordinated with such schools started for adult illiterates? In what manner will the primary schools be linked with secondary schools and latter with higher educational institutions?

Further, should the schools in the rural area be open air or single room schools? Should they be specialized and differentiated or omnibus institutes? And, finally, how should the school time be adjusted to the exigencies of agricultural and artisan labour in which not only village adults but also youngsters participate?

The educational scheme will also raise such problems as those of the graded system of schools, suitable curricula to be evolved in the spirit of the social ideal in view, and the graded system of courses.

3 Technical And Other Means For Its Spread

During the last two hundred years, humanity has made amazing progress in the domain of technology. It has invented railways, steamships, aeroplanes, telephone and telegraph, radio, cinema and other marvellous technical devices. These devices constitute the valuable material means of integrating humanity into a single unit as well as of building up of a rich and unified economic and cultural life on a national and even international scale.

Formerly the school was practically the only effective lever of education. After those astonishing inventions, the school can be reinforced by other means also.

These modern means, it must be noted, have not yet been sufficiently utilised for educational and cultural purposes in our country.

We will enumerate below some of the principal among these means which, along with the school, are available for the rapid advance of education and cultural enlightenment of our people:

(a) School.
(b) Library.
(c) Museum.
(d) Movie.
(e) Radio.
(f) Mobile van.
(g) Gymnasiums and Sport Centres.

A maximum and simultaneous utilization of these means will undoubtedly accelerate the process of extension of education and culture among the rural people.

We will refer very briefly to the specific role of these various means.

(a) *School*: The school should remain the principal lever of education. It can serve as the medium of formal education, patterned and planned.

(b) *Library*: The library adequately equipped with books scientifically dealing with varied subjects; with newspapers and magazines of local, national and even international significance; and with charts and maps; can be a rich reservoir of variegated knowledge, social, political, technical, economic and cultural. It can also enable the villager to follow decisive national and international happenings. The art section of the library can help him to develop a refined aesthetic sense and artistic taste. The library, when properly made use of, will help him to broaden his outlook, enlarge his vision, extend the frontier of his knowledge and to visualise local developments as an integral part of one single organic world development. He will thereby steadily build up a national and even international consciousness.

The library is particularly necessary in the village to-day, because, due to its absence, a large number of even those few, who have become literate through elementary village school education, cannot maintain their ability to read and hence lapse into illiteracy. As in the case of a bodily organ, a capacity atrophies when it is not continuously exercised.

The programme of providing the library to the rural area raises a number of problems. A veritable legion of them will be required for tens of thousands of villages in our country. Further, a good section of the village library should comprise literature adapted to the specific psychology, inferior cultural level, and requirements of life of the village people. The production of such literature will itself present a task of stupendous proportion. The problem of fixing its content will bring headache even to expert educationists.

(c) *Museum*: The role of the museum as a source of knowledge is not often sufficiently realized even by the educated man. The various studies prepared by the League of Nations in the past vividly demonstrate the great significance of the museum in the educational programme for the rural people. Even a museum with a local scope has a great value for the enlightenment of the villager. It can bring him rich information about the geography, the geology and the topography of the local territory, its flora and fauna, racial stocks inhabiting it, its arts and crafts as well as its past embodied in historical records and relics. This would enable the villager to get a vivid composite picture of the life and culture of the local people of whom he is a part, in various stages of their development. It would thus help him to develop a historical sense and thereby recognize the causal connection between the past and the present. It would further deepen and vivify his imagination, enhance his sense of appreciation and strengthen his habit of observation. It would also deepen his interest in the social and natural worlds in which he lives. This would engender in him the urge to transform those worlds.

The museum will prove a valuable reinforcement to the school and the library in the complex of means of disseminating education and culture among the rural people. It will not only improve the quality and quantity of education but will also, further, serve as a priceless additional source of material and factual data for preparing an authentic, multi-sided history of the people.

(d) *Movie*: It is very difficult to realize the hidden potentialities of the cinema, one of the most outstanding inventions of modern times, for creative social use. It can be a most powerful means of disseminating the modern protean culture among the people on a mass scale. It can be a classic weapon of mass education. It is a most effective means precisely because it enables hundreds of persons simultaneously to imbibe education and culture visually. In minimum of time the cinema can transmit maximum of instruction and cultural information. Further, since it operates through a succession of visual images interpreted through words, it accentuates

interest in the educational and cultural content of those images. It is, in addition, the most economical method of spreading knowledge because it does not involve the necessity of engaging a large personnel of instructors.

This marvellous instrument has not still been utilized for mass education in India. It should be adopted as rapidly as possible as a means for educating the rural population in the briefest possible time and also for making accessible to them the immense wealth of contemporary artistic and intellectual culture.

(e) *Radio*: Radio is another remarkable invention which, too, can reinforce the school as an auxiliary means of the education of the rural people. Ideally, each village should be equipped with a radio in the central place. Songs of great artists relayed by the radio will not only have recreational and emotionally nourishing value for the villager but will also develop his aesthetic faculty. Radio will further keep him acquainted with day to day events, both national and international. Further, talks given on radio on various themes by eminent experts and specialists will bring valuable knowledge to the village people.

(f) *Mobile Van*: Mobile vans, equipped with loudspeakers, radio films, libraries and cultural objects, will greatly accelerate the spread of knowledge among the rural population. They can travel from village to village and bring enlightenment at the very door of the rural people. This would draw even its inert section, which lacks sufficient enthusiasm to visit schools or libraries into the orbit of modern culture.

(g) *Gymnasiums and Sport Centres*: The role of gymnasiums and sport centres as valuable means of physical culture and recreation should not be underestimated. They help to build up a physically sturdy and vivacious rural people. Further, by drawing the people in the sphere of vital and pleasant collective activities, they develop such qualities as social solidarity, co-operative habits, and social discipline among them. This is recognized by educationists and sociologists all over the world. The technique both of physical culture and sport has appreciably grown in quantity and quality in modern times due to the great advance of general technique. The modern gymnasiums are equipped with more complex and varied instruments than those of the previous societies. In the world of sport too, new games like cricket, lawn and table tennis, badminton, hockey and others have been added to the old ones.

Further, in former times, gymnastics and sports were isolated local activities only. In contrast to this, in modern times they have acquired a national and even international scope as is proved by national and international contests which are organized to-day. Not only are modern games and sports more specialized, differentiated and consciously planned but they have also become a permanent feature of the life of the society. This is unlike in former times when games and sports were only episodic phenomena mainly associated as subsidiaries with important social and religious functions.

It must, however, be noted that modern games, which have been practically transplanted from the West, have not still penetrated the rural area. This is primarily due to their expensive character.

Indigenous games and gymnastics bequeathed from pre-modern India still exist in the rural area.

One of the tasks confronting the rural educationist is to evolve a synthetic physical and sport culture which would be a creative amalgam of the best elements of pre-modern and modern physical and sport cultures.

The establishment of gymnasiums and sport centres, conceived in the spirit of such a scheme of synthetic physical and sport culture, in villages should be a part of the educational programme for the rural people.

This in brief is a survey of the role of various means, available in the modern age, for carrying out a comprehensive scheme of education and culture for the rural people. The problem is complex and the task colossal. However, the solution of this problem is vitally necessary for evolving a generation of sturdy people equipped with modern knowledge who alone can be the architect of a rural society based upon democratic and co-operative socio-economic relations and pulsating with rich cultural life.

For accomplishing this signal task it is necessary to abandon not only the old conception of rural education but also of the machinery to spread it. It is not only necessary to create schools and libraries in the rural area but also to establish museums, cinemas exhibiting educational films, radio sets relaying topical news and gymnasiums and sport centres, and, further, to organize a numerous fleet of mobile vans equipped with libraries, films and loud speakers constantly engaged in their peripatatic educational and cultural campaign.

4 Finance And Personnel

The principal prerequisites for a successful fulfilment of the programme of rural education and culture outlined before are first, the mobilization of the necessary finances and secondly, the creation of the personnel to man the gigantic venture.

The financial resources at the disposal of a nation for implementing progressive plans in various spheres of life, in final analysis, depend on the productive power of the social economy which, in its turn, is determined by the natural resources of the country, the technique of production in industry and agriculture, and above all, by the character of the social economy within which the production process is carried on. The extant social economy may help or hinder the free and rapid development of the productive forces of a society. The rural sociologist has, therefore, to be interested in the economic system prevailing in a country, study it, and decide whether it requires to be modified or even overhauled in the interests of the economic advance of the people and the resultant expansion of their material wealth. Only then the community can set apart finance requisite for the realization of comprehensive reform or reconstruction programmes including that of the rural education. Material prosperity and social and cultural advance of a people are indissolubly bound up. Culture is the spiritual perfume of the social economy.

The problem of teaching and directing personnel is another baffling problem. An enormous number of cadres of instructors, who have imbibed modern culture and who are, further, fired with social passion, will be needed to fulfil the comprehensive educational plan.

Rural Education, A Herculean Task

Only when all the above-mentioned factors—a comprehensive scientific educational and cultural plan, a properly elaborated organizational machinery, various modern technical devices, a large personnel trained in modern knowledge and, finally, adequate financial resources—are created, it is possible to liquidate illiteracy among the rural people and also to bring treasures of modern knowledge and culture to them.

The problem of the rural education—its scope, methods, means, agencies, finances and personnel—is one of the most vital problems confronting the student of rural society in India.

CHAPTER XIII

AESTHETIC CULTURE OF THE RURAL PEOPLE

Aesthetic Culture, Its Chief Ingredients

Aesthetic culture is an integral part of the total culture of a society. It expresses in art terms the ideals, the aspirations, the dreams, the values, and the attitudes of its people, just as its intellectual culture reveals its knowledge of the natural and social worlds which surround them.

A systematic study of the aesthetic culture of the Indian rural society, in its historical movement of the dissolation of old types and the emergence of new ones, is vital for the study of the changing pattern of the cultural life of the rural people. Further, since art reflects social life and its changes, such a study will help the rural sociologist to comprehend the movement of the rural society itself as it progressed from its past shape to its present one. It will also reveal the changes in the psychological structures of the rural people and its sub-groups.

Eminent sociologists have enumerated the following principal arts comprising the aesthetic culture of rural society:

(1) Graphic Arts such as Drawing, Painting, Engraving and others which have two dimensional forms.

(2) Plastic Arts which "involve the manipulations of materials to yield three dimensional forms—that is to say—carving and modelling in high and low relief and in the round."

(3) Folklore comprised of "myths, tales, proverbs, riddles, verse together with music."

(4) Dance and drama which combine the three forms mentioned above and therefore are "synthetic" arts.

Its Chief Characteristics In Subsistence Societies

Outstanding rural sociologists like Herskovief, Sorokin, Zimmerman, Galpin, and others have also located a number of specific characteristics of the aesthetic culture of the rural people living in society based on subsistence economy. The following are the important among them:

(1) Art was fused with life.

As Sorokin remarks, "The arts were not sharply differentiated from religion, magic, intellectual pursuits, and other activities. Aes-

thetic elements penetrated to practically all daily occupations including agricultural work and they were an inseparable part of religious and other cultural activities".[1]

(2) The people as a whole took part in artistic activities.

This is in contrast to the situation in the present society where the people are divided into artists who perform art and the audience which enjoys it. This antithesis was not known to earlier society.

A social group, a family, or the village people as a whole, did not break itself into actors and spectators when they engaged themselves in artistic activity. Men, women, and children of the group, all participated in it; "they were both the actors and the audience". There were very few professional artists in that society. In the social division of labour artistic work was not still separated from the total social work so as to create a special body of social workers like artists.

(3) Art was predominantly familistic.

As seen in the previous chapters, in the pre-modern society, the life of the rural aggregate had familistic character. Consequently, the rural art, which was fused with the life of the rural people, also bore the impress of familism. "The significance, the manifestations, the content and the symbolism of rural aesthetic activities were permeated with familism. Births, marriages, deaths and sickness of members of the family were the main subjects of rural art."[2]

(4) The technique of art was simple.

This was due to the comparatively low level of general technique of the period, on which the technique of art depends.

The instruments of rural art were the products of the village artisan industry. Often the family itself made some of these in the home.

This is in contrast to the instruments of modern art which are the products of modern industries and are therefore complex, highly specialised, varied and multifold.

A simple drum (*DHOL, NAGARA, DHOLAK, DUFF, KHANJRI, NOBAT*); a flute made out of simple reeds or handy wood; a few stringed instruments not complicated in structure (Ektar, Ravanhatha); some metal instruments of simple design like gongs,

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[1]Systematic Sourcebook in Rural Sociology; Vol. II, p. 445.
[2]Ibid; p. 446.

bells, *MANJIRAS;* some wooden instruments like *KARTAL;* ordinary metal vessels of domestic use like *THALI, GAGAR, LOTA* or drinking pot, tongs; such natural objects as branches of trees, feathers of birds, shells, conches;—these constituted the technical prerequisites of art in the pre-modern Indian rural society. Further, art performances were organized not in theatres and concert halls as in modern times but either in domestic premises or in open village spaces. The village drama was enacted not on any imposing stage equipped with colourful curtains, flashlights, and rich scenery in the background. Much of the realism was achieved not by suggestive or symbolic artifice but was created by histrionics.

(5) Art had agrarian life processes as its main content.

Since art was fused with life, it depicted the life of the rural people in its various aspects, economic, social and religious. For instance, "The most common of the work songs of non-urbanized agricultural peoples were those that accompanied collective agricultural occupations, hunting and fishing, grain-grinding and milling, flax-thrashing, corn-thrashing, ploughing and seeding, fruit-picking and so forth.....Some of their religious and magical songs were concerned with love, death, mourning, health and fertility, others dealt with agricultural activities and were sung as a part of the religious and magical rites connected with spring, summer, fall and winter festivities, still others honoured the grove, wood, field and corn deities....Both work songs and religious songs were inseparably connected with daily life and with the religion and magic that centered in agriculture."[3]

Even a cursory survey of the songs of the Indian rural people corroborates the above view. Agricultural work processes like sowing, reaping, and harvesting; or other work processes like the fetching of water from the well by women; or sentiments of gratitude to gods for successful agricultural operations or plaintive appeal to them for their fruition; form the main thematic content of those songs.

Dance, another form of art, had also, for its predominant content the real agrarian life processes. Similarly, the folklore composed of legends, myths and stories, mostly dealt with the same theme either in a direct or symbolic form.

Ornamental and decorative rural arts also bore the impress of the rural environmental and social milieu. The specific flora and

[3] Ibid; p. 451.

fauna found in the rural area provided material for design. Rural artistic creations in these and other spheres "are based on rural environment and occupation; trees, flowers and plants, horses, cattle and other animals, birds and fish and peasant houses."[4] Further, geometrical designs characterizing those arts had a magical meaning bearing on various agrarian life processes.

The rural sociologists have also observed that "Agricultural characteristics are most clearly manifest in songs, music, dances, stories, proverbs, riddles, literature, pantomimes, festivals, dramatic performances and similar forms of the arts; they are less conspicuous in designs, ornamentations, architecture and sculpture, but even here if properly interpreted, the agricultural stamp is noticeable."[5]

(6) Art creations were predominantly collectivecreations collective in spirit.

This is one of the most striking features of the rural art. While in the urban area, songs, stories, dramas, and such other art pieces, have been the products of individual artists, practically the entire folklore of the rural people, comprising rural songs and tales as well as rural dramas, has been the collective creation of generations of rural artists. Their authorship cannot be traced to individual artists since no individual artists created them. They remain, therefore, almost always anonymous in origin.

As a result of this, the rural art has been overwhelmingly collective in spirit. It has expressed the fears, joys, aspirations, and dreams of the collectivity even more than the most social art of the urban society. Further, it has been marked with profound naturalness, sincerity, and spontaneity. This is in contrast to the urban art which is either commercialized and, therefore, caters largely to the emotions of its potential buyers or is super-individualistic (ivory tower art) and embodies the individualistic caprices and momentary emotions of the artist. Further, rural art has expressed the sentiments and life experiences of countless generations. It has been, therefore, also more organic and durable than most of the urban art.

(7) Rural art was non-commercial.

In agrarian societies based on self-sufficient economies, products have not the character of commodities. Thinkers and artists create their intellectual and artistic products not for the market but for

[4]Ibid ; p. 453.
[5]Ibid ; p. 451.

the direct consumption of the village rural aggregate that looks after their needs. Rural art, hence, is not commercialized. Since the rural artist is not motivated by the urge to make profit through his art creations, his artistic activity is urged on only by the artistic aim. The urban artist, in contrast to this, is torn between two urges; one, the urge for artistic self-expression and the other, the need to make livelihood in a competitive economic environs by producing for the market and hence by adapting his art to the tastes of those who can buy it. This dualism disrupts his artistic personality and tends to distort his art. The rural artist does not suffer from these contradictory motives and his art is, therefore, "harmonious".

Here we must strictly guard ourselves against the danger of idealizing rural art and the self-sufficient society which generates that art. In such a society, the individual is not still differentiated from the collectivity, be it the joint family, the caste, or the village community. The individual is subordinated to these groups. The structure and environment of such a society do not, therefore, provide freedom for the development of the creative individuality of its members or scope for them to strike out new unconventional paths of thought and craftsmanship. This puts a limitation on the rural art though its collective spirit should be properly noted and valued.

The competitive socio-economic environs of the modern society, on the other hand, while differentiating and liberating the individual from the pressure of the collectivity on his free development, tends to weaken his social urges. Most of the urban art is, therefore, individualistic. It mostly portrays the struggles of the individual against the stifling forces of the unplanned competitive society. Excepting for a growing minority art current, which mirrors the dream of and struggle for a higher co-operative society, the existing urban art is, largely, socially sterile, morbid or escapist.

(8) Artistic craftsmanship and culture were transmitted from generation to generation orally.

This was due to the fact that there existed no printing press which would produce literature on art. Further, there did not exist any schools or academies of art in self-sufficient societies. Hence, they were mainly the family elders who trained the youngsters in the knowledge and execution of arts like folk songs, folk dances and others.

We have referred elsewhere to the process of the transformation of the old rural society into the new modern society.

Transformation Of Rural Aesthetic Culture

We will briefly summarize the most striking features of this transformation in the sphere of rural aesthetic culture. Art gradually became a specialized activity of the artist. The village population increasingly became differentiated into artists and the rest. Individual artist or a group of artists sang and danced on festive occasions, the rest of the village people constituting the audience. The technique of art also slowly altered, became more complex thanks to the ability of modern industry to produce complex art instruments. Above all, since commodity production extended to the village also, art itself became a commodity and the artist, a seller of the artistic goods. Pecuniary gain became the main motif of artistic creation.

Art, moreover, became gradually separated from life. Its thematic content changed. It began to draw its themes and imagery from new sources such as the travails of the individual struggling against the pressures of a competitive socio-economic environment. Formerly, it dealt with the vicissitudes of the life of the village collectivity; now it concerned itself with the fate of the individual. Thus art increasingly ceased to be a collective activity of the village group as a whole dealing with its collective life processes and became the individual activity of the artist dealing with the problems of the individual struggling in a competitive world. Further, the traditional practice of handing down art from generation to generation began to decline also since the printing press made it possible to perpetuate art techniques and art creations like folk songs and village tales in the printed form.

The modern cinema with its film songs and film stories, the gramophone with its song records, together with the radio, slowly began to penetrate the rural zone and became new means of aesthetic delight for the rural population.

These developments led to the increasing urbanization of the rural aesthetic culture. Thus under the impact of the technical and ecomic forces of modern society, not only did the socio-economic structure of the rural society undergo a signal transformation but its aesthetic culture with its specific characteristics also suffered an increasing change.

The Indian rural society, for the last one hundred and fifty years, has been experiencing a historical change. The change has not, however, advanced to the same extent as in some other countries since a foreign power which ruled India during this period retarded the process of rapid industrialization and resultant modernization

of our country. In West European countries and the U.S.A. the urbanization of the old rural society and its aesthetic culture have advanced to a far greater degree than in India. It must, however, be noted that even in those advanced countries the aesthetic culture of the rural society possesses a number of specific characteristics which distinguish it from the aesthetic culture of the urban society.

It is essential for the Indian rural sociologist to study the aesthetic culture of the contemporary rural Indian people and the transformation it is undergoing. Such a study will enable him to comprehend the transformation of the life of the rural people and their struggles, dreams and aspirations. Art reveals life through more subtle nuances and often provides a more authentic picture of life than what even history books can give. The French society of Balzac's period is more vividly and truthfully laid bare when viewed through the prism of his great realistic novels than as revealed by the French historians in their works.

As. Mr. Morris observes:

"To a superlative degree the arts express the qualities which an age prizes, the human actions which it cherishes, and the ideals which it ennobles.....In the aesthetic attitude, a culture can be captured and held, not as a set of bare facts to be statistically tabulated, but as a function of the travail of human minds."

The aesthetic culture of the rural people should be next studied from the standpoint of (1) its content and (2) its form.

Content Of Rural Aesthetic Culture

The rural aesthetic culture, a rich complex of myths, legends, folk songs, folk tales, riddles and proverbs, dances, dramas and pantomimes, and graphic and plastic arts, transmitted from generation to generation, embodies directly or symbolically the world outlook, social conceptions and ethical norms of the rural people as they emerged and changed across ages. It can serve as a very valuable source material for a rural sociologist of imagination and insight to build up a concrete vivid picture of the technical, economic, social, religious, moral and cultural life of the rural aggregate in various periods. Since the rural aesthetic culture was always anchored in the life of the rural people, was fused with it and, further, artistically mirrored it, it would reveal what technique they employed in material production in a particular period, what weapons they used in warfare, what ornaments and costumes they wore, what houses they built and lived in, what socio-economic system prevailed during

that period, what social classes comprised it, what social conflicts rent it, what type of family and other social institutions then existed, what customs ruled the people, what views and attitudes they held on diverse problems, what norms and criteria determined their social conduct. It will thus not only lay bare the social structure and life of the people in a past period but will also disclose their social, ethical and religious conceptions as well as their material and ideal aspirations and aims. It will also reveal the story of their brave social endeavour, also of their reverses and victories.

The enormous rich material comprising the rural aesthetic culture has to be first assembled, analysed and classified. The next task for the rural sociologist is to interpret it with deep historical imagination and sociological insight. This alone will help him to achieve a living objective picture of the rural society and the rural life as they existed in the past. This is specially necessary because no detailed written history is available.

The Indian rural society is divided into a number of regional rural socities.

A comparative study of the contents of the aesthetic cultures of these units will disclose elements common to them such as a number of common folk songs, folk tales, myths, proverbs, riddles and others, though generally to be found with regional variations.

Such a discovery will help to comprehend the process of the diffusion of culture which had taken place in various rural zones of India in the past. It will also help to get an adequate picture of the historical process of the contacts and collisions, amalgamation or even assimilation, among numerous tribes and communities which lived in India in past epochs. A veritable past history of the Indian rural society and the Indian rural humanity can be composed through such a comparative study of the various rural aesthetic cultures of the various rural zones today.

Such a history of the Indian rural society is indispensable for evolving the history of the Indian society as a whole.

There are various means of deciphering the past history of the Indian people. The study of the variegated and massive content of the aesthetic cultures of the regional agrarian groups and its evaluation will serve as perhaps one of its most fruitful means for that purpose. Nevertheless, all the varied means should be utilised in mutual co-ordination.

Form Of Rural Aesthetic Culture

After studying the content of the rural aesthetic culture, it is necessary to study the specific forms in which this culture is expressed.

There exists an organic relationship between the content and the form of art. It consists in the unity of its form and content, the content determining the form.

The specific content of the rural aesthetic culture outlined previously determines the specific forms of that culture. It determines the styles of painting, engraving, sculpture and architecture; the designs of costumes and ornaments; the tunes of folk songs and the rhythms of folk poetry; the structures of folk tales, dances and dramas. Further, a good proportion of that culture is marked with symbolism and it is the task of the rural sociologist to penetrate through the symbols and uncover the hidden significant idea conveyed in an art work.

The Indian rural aesthetic culture comprising various regional rural cultures exhibits a variety of styles, patterns and modes. For instance, we have such varied forms as Sorathas, Dohas, (Chaupais, and Chhappas, Kirtans, Bhajans, Abhangas, Pavadas, Deshis, Horis, Kajaris, Kawalis and others in the domain of poetry and song; Rasas, Garbas and others in the sphere of dance; and Bhavais, Ramlilas, Tamasas and others in the field of drama. Similarly the worlds of other rural arts also reveal a rich diversity of forms.

The study of different forms of the art cultures of different regional rural communities will help us to distinguish them as distinct cultural units. Further, since the agrarian life possesses certain common characteristics, though with local and regional variations, such a study will also reveal how basically the same life content has been variously handled in the sphere of art by different agrarian communities.

A considerable amount of specialization is found in the agrarian arts mainly because the art is fused with concrete activities like sowing, reaping, harvesting and others or with such articles of utility as ornaments and earthenware. Again, since the art creations maintain a thematic continuity, the arts dealing with them are enriched from generation to generation. There is thus continuous improvement of agrarian arts, their forms, styles and patterns.

A study of the forms of various regional aesthetic cultures discloses the significant fact that a number of them are essentially

the same with regional variations only. This would assist the rural sociologist to resolve the problem of the diffusion of art forms, and of the migrations of a number of rural arts.

The Indian rural people have a long and rich history of aesthetic culture. Musical concerts and dramas were a feature of the rural life during the Maurya period and have been, as A.S. Altekar states, described as "Prēksha, by Chānakya and "Samāja" by Ashoka. They were an integral part of the celebrations of religious festivals such as Ram-Navmi, Gokul-Ashtami, Dasera, Ganesh Chaturthi, and Holi. They were also organised at village and inter-village fairs which were great social occasions in pre-modern times.

Trends Of The Changes In Aesthetic Culture

Since the advent of the British in India, as previously seen, a process of the fundamental alteration of Indian society began. As a result of this the psychology of the rural people also changed. The old aesthetic culture began to decline. The process is still continuing. The old arts have been gradually declining though the new modern ones have not been replacing them with the same tempo.

The rural sociologist is confronted with the problem of a renaissance of the rural aesthetic culture. He has to resolve a number of problems germane to a programme of such a renaissance. What will be the nature of the new aesthetic culture? What will be its content and form? Will the new rural arts be fused with the new rural life? Will the organic unity of art and life, the basic characteristic of the old aesthetic culture, be preserved in the new art? Will the new rural art retain the sincerity and the spontaniety of the old one or will it be sophisticated as a good section of the modern urban art is? What will be the ideology informing it? Will it be a mass art in which the people participate or will it be a distinct domain of the professional artists? Will it be a commercialized art produced by artists who subordinate their self-expression to the needs of the market or an ivory tower art where the artists create solely for their own satisfaction, or an art which is social and still provides free self-expression for the artist? These are some of the vital problems which the rural sociologist has to investigate.

Further, modern humanity has at its disposal an advanced technology which can create a complex and multifold technique of art. The material means and resources available today for such arts as painting, music, drama, architecture and others are simply astounding. They can serve as the material prerequisite for the creation of a rich and variegated artistic mass culture which can express pro-

found social ideas and portray individual and mass emotions in all their complexity and variety. The new art by means of the material technique accessible to it can work up not merely a few simple collective ideas and emotions as the old rural art did, but also the multifold and complex collective as well as individualized ideas and emotions which the modern rural humanity even today conceives and feels under the impact of a changing agrarian world. With the steady transformation of the rural society, the social relations are being constantly recast engendering new conceptions and feelings, new social passions, dreams and aspirations.

The existing rural aesthetic culture is in a state of increasing disorganization. This, in the final analysis, is the result of the increasing disorganization of the rural society itself of which it is the aesthetic reflex. The crisis of culture is the product of the crisis of society.

The problem arises whether the process of increasing disorganization and dissolution which the present rural aesthetic culture is undergoing will culminate into the emergence of a new historically higher aesthetic culture.

It depends on how the crisis of the present rural society is resolved. If the present rural society is replaced by one materially and culturally more advanced and based on co-operative social relations, a higher aesthetic culture will spring as a beautiful flower on the tree of such a higher type of society.

As mentioned before, the rural aesthetic culture has been declining and some of the rural arts even disappearing. From the standpoint of the history of the evolution of the Indian art, it is necessary to preserve the knowledge of the present rural aesthetic culture. Further, this is also necessary because, in absence of the written history of the early phases of the Indian society and insufficiently recorded history of subsequent phases, the rural aesthetic culture with its myths and legends, folk tales and folk songs, dances and dramas, paintings, engravings and statues, can provide a clue to the life of the Indian people in past epochs.

Modern technical means such as printing press, gramophone, camera, film and others can be made use of for preserving the rural songs and stories, statuary and architecture, fables and legends, through printing, recording and photographing.

For all these reasons a careful study of the rural aesthetic culture is indispensable for the student of the rural society.

CHAPTER XIV

CHANGING RURAL WORLD

Rural Society, Changing

Like all other phenomena the rural society too has been changing since its emergence. Its technology, economy and social institutions; its ideology, art and religion; have undergone a ceaseless change. This change has sometimes been imperceptibly slow, sometimes strikingly rapid, and at some moments even qualitative in character resulting into the transformation of one type of rural society into another type.

To discern change in a system, to recognize its direction, to understand the objective and subjective forces which bring it about and, further, to consciously accelerate the process of change by helping the progressive trends within the changing system—this constitutes a scientific approach to and active creative intervention in the life of a system.

Rural Change, Factors Responsible

We will now refer to the forces and factors, conscious or unconscious, which bring about change in rural society.

Close investigators of rural society have enumerated a number of these forces and factors, the following being the principal among them.

Natural Factors

Natural forces such as floods, earthquakes, famines and others affect the territorial zone in which the rural people live. They have a disastrous effect on the flora and the fauna of the zone which often considerably influences the economic life of the people, and, in the case of earthquakes of dangerous intensity, even sometimes result in large scale loss of human life and material devastation. The rural collectivity lives in the midst of a specific geographical and geological milieu and manipulates them through agriculture, mining and other operations. Hence a profound change in earth structures modifies or sometimes even convulses its life processes.

These are natural forces which bring about change in rural society.

There are human factors, too, which operate to alter that society.

Technological Factors

As observed earlier, man carries on his struggle against environment by means of tools. He has, therefore, been ceaselessly engaged in improving the old tools and inventing new ones. Though the inventors create new tools consciously, they are unable to prognosticate the social consequences of their inventions which are sometimes far-reaching. The invention of new tools, new means of transport and communications, and the discovery of new materials such as iron, new chemical substances and others, result in the change in the life of the rural people, in their economy and even in the structures of their social and political relations. The far-reaching economic, social and political outcomes of outstanding inventions like the plough, the steam engine and others, were not and could not be predicted by their inventors.

As Prof. Ogburn observes, the invention of radio led to about 150 major changes in social life.

The invention of steam-driven machinery in England resulted in the evolution of modern industries, which, at a certain stage of their development, needed foreign market. This led to the political and the economic expansion of Britain and the rise and growth of the British Empire. Once the power-driven technique was invented, it was adopted by other nations also. Western nations, in steady succession, developed modern industries and, due to the need of foreign market for their industrial products, conquered other countries and built up empires. This changed the economic and political life of those nations as well as of those who were subjected to them. The societies of the countries of both the dominant as well as the subject nations were either completely transformed or appreciably modified.

What is true of the national societies is also true of the rural society since it is an integral part of the national society.

Various Conscious Methods

Next we will survey the methods and devices adopted by social groups and organizations to consciously bring about the alteration or transformation of the rural world.

Eminent sociologists like Sims and others have collected and mentioned various techniques and methods used by these groups and organizations. The following are the chief among them:

(1) Persuasive Method

The protagonists of this method seek to convince the rural population of the necessity of effecting changes in the rural society in

various spheres, technical, economic, social and others, through or ganized propaganda campaign. They endeavour to popularise among them various rural reform or rural reconstruction programmes and exhort them to implement these programmes.

The distinguishing characteristic of this method lies in the fact that its proponents restrict their effort only to the propaganda of their programmes. They do not themselves initiate or participate in implementing the programmes. They leave this to the rural people themselves.

This is because the exponents of this method have almost limitless faith in the force of argument. They hold the view that it is possible by means of suitable argument to convince the rural people of the need for change in the rural social structure, to kindle in them the urge for such a change, to popularise among them an appropriate programme of rural reform or reconstruction and, through this, to rouse them to practical activity for the accomplishment of that programme.

(2) Demonstrative Method

This method is also known as the method of propaganda through example or by deed. The exponents of this method endeavour to popularise their programme of rural reconstruction or specific reform by themselves implementing it on a miniature scale. They declare that the rural population would be more easily convinced of the advantages of a programme of rural change if the advantages of such a programme are demonstrated in action. They consider this method more effective than that of mere oral and written propaganda.

For instance, they organize demonstration farms to convince the farmers of the superiority of a new technique and new and better methods of agricultural production. They start model agricultural colonies based on the co-operative principle to rouse the farmers to the recognition of the economic advantages of co-operative farming so that they themselves, on their own initiative, may combine or integrate their individual uneconomic or semi-economic holdings and embark on the road to co-operative or collective agriculture. They establish a few educational and health centres so that the rural population may recognize the benefits of education and hygiene and, thereafter, themselves start schools and health centres in the entire rural area.

(3) "Compulsory" Method

The state itself often intervenes and, through legislation, brings about changes in the rural life or the rural social structure. It is not

the will and the initiative of the rural people but of the state that determine and accomplish those changes. During the War, "To rural America, along with the rest, coercive measures were applied. Among other things, production was made compulsory, prices were fixed, the disposal of food stuffs prescribed and time of labour regulated by law".

In India, a number of states have recently enacted anti-zamindari laws to alter land relations in the rural areas.

Such "compulsory" intervention of the state in the life of the rural people has been increasing in modern times.

(4) Method of Social Pressure

This method is adopted by a rural individual, a group or a class to achieve a desired change in the life of the rural people or in the rural social or economic structure. The means resorted to may vary widely. They may include petitioning, passive resistance, individual and group satyagraha, processions and marches, strikes and demonstrations, even individual terrorism (for instance killing of moneylenders or landlords by farmers or tenants), mass revolts, revolutions and others.

These forms of pressure and struggle have been growing more and more prevalent in modern times.

The rural sociologist has to carefully analyse and study these forms of struggle since they have been playing a significant role in transforming rural societies of various countries in the contemporary epoch.

(5) Contact Method

"It is generally recognized that one of the most effective means of social change is found in contact of cultures....where peoples of different cultures come in touch with one another, cross-fertilization takes place."

In the medieval age, the town and the village lived almost independent social, economic and cultural existence. This separatism was increasingly undermined as a result of the extension and wider and wider ramification of modern means of transport and communication all over the country and resultant closer and closer contact of urban and rural populations. Further, the village economy was transformed and became an integral part of the national and even international economy. This created and multiplied the points of contact between the rural and urban societies and their populations.

This increasingly led to the changes in the socio-economic structure of the rural society and the life of the rural people.

The historical tendency is towards a growing urbanization of the rural society due to the stronger impact of the urban forces on the latter.

(6) Educational Method

The increasing spread of modern education among the rural people through the establishment of schools and other educational institutions has been one of the very effective means to bring about changes in the rural life and the rural social structure. The village people, when they are initiated in scientific knowledge of life and the world, would find it easy to break with superstition which affects their consciousness and keep them conservative.

A group of social thinkers invest the educational method with decisive importance in bringing about the rural change.

Conclusion

We have referred above to some of the principal methods observed by some of the eminent rural sociologists, which have been operating to bring about the rural change.

These methods should be carefully studied by those who desire to evolve a programme of rural reform or reconstruction. They should assess the value of these methods and assign them a proportional significance while elaborating such a programme.

In part II of the present work, we have presented valuable observations made by Prof. N. L. Sims on the various techniques of the rural change.

CHAPTER XV

RURAL SOCIOLOGY, A GUIDE TO RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

Three Schools Of Rural Reconstruction

There are numerous individuals and groups who desire and strive for the improvement of the material and cultural life of the rural people.

They can be broadly divided into the following three categories:

(i) The Philanthropic group;

(ii) The Reformist group; and

(iii) The Revolutionary group.

The Philanthropic Group

The Philanthropic group does not view the problem of the material and cultural poverty of the rural people in the context of the institutions and the basic structure of the rural society. It holds the conviction that it is possible to ameliorate the position of the rural people through direct humanitarian effort, without changing those institutions and structure. It evolves economic, educational and other programmes of village uplift which embody such items as creation of charity funds to help the village needy, moral appeals to landlords and such other groups to relax their pressure on peasants, establishment of hospitals and schools, and others.

The basic feature of the standpoint and the programmatic approach of this group to the problem lies in the fact that it attempts to improve the conditions of the rural population within the matrix of the existing institutions and structure of the rural society, by means of purely humanitarian endeavour.

The Reformist Group

The Reformist group subscribes to the view that it is the malfunctioning of the existing rural social system and its institutions (and not the social system and its institutions in their basic essence), which is the social-genetic cause of the economic misery and social and cultural backwardness of the rural people. They, therefore, work for a healthy functioning of the social system and its institutions, or, at most, for reforming them. They assert that once this institu-

tional reform is accomplished, it will result in the all-sided betterment of the life of the rural population.

The distinguishing characteristic of the standpoint and the programmatic approach of this group to the problem lies in the fact that for elevating the conditions of the rural people at present it does not regard it necessary to replace the existing social system and its institutions by new ones but strives only to reform them.

The Revolutionary Group

Finally, there is a third group whose standpoint and programmatic approach to the problem are based on a revolutionary conception. They think that the abysmal poverty, crass ignorance, and cultural backwardness of the mass of the rural people are fundamentally due to the existing social system and the institutions which are its organs to sustain that system. The social system and its institutions, they feel, cannot but breed these evils. They declare, therefore, that both the programme of individual aid and relief and that of institutional reform will be unable to achieve the desired end. They contend that no reform can appreciably liberate the rural people from want, disease, illiteracy, and lack of culture. They argue that new wine cannot be filled into the old bottles.

Thus, according to this group, the evils of the rural society are not the result of any malfunctioning of the rural social system or its institutions but are inherent in this system and institutions themselves, are the inevitable product of the natural functioning of the present social order. This group, therefore, evolves and attempts to carry out a programme of a revolutionary transformation of the rural social structure from its economic base upward.

While laying decisive emphasis on its social revolutionary objective, this group includes in its programme a number of items of the first two programmes. It, however, links its struggle to implement those items with the struggle for the change of the entire social system.

These three groups with their diverse and even conflicting programmes are at present struggling for hegemony in the agrarian area.

Rural Reconstruction Programmes, Their Principal Weaknesses

Various individual groups, associations and parties, each according to its own light, are thus engaged in the movement of rural uplift and reconstruction. Among them are individual philanthropists

and philanthropic bodies; social, political, religious, economic and educational organizations including welfare associations; missionary groups; Governmental institutions and others.

We will make a few observations regarding the work of these groups and organizations.

(1) Exclusive Concentration On One Aspect Of The Rural Life

Some of them exclusively concentrate on one single aspect of the rural life like education, economic welfare, sanitation, crusade against reactionary social customs and practices, religious superstition, ethical uplift or fight against disease. They isolate one aspect of the rural life from its other aspects. The organic unity of the rural life and the interrelations and interdependence of its many aspects are thus lost sight of.

This results either in the abortion or limited success of their programme even when dealing with one single aspect of the rural life.

(2) Predominantly Emotional Approach

Most of these groups and organizations, while inspired by ethical and humanitarian motives, lack scientific training for the work they undertake. They forget that an objective study of the rural society and its conditions is vital for evolving a correct programme and methodology of work and that merely good intentions are no guarantee of successful social work. They forget that a patient gathering of factual data pertaining to the life of the rural people and a detailed concrete study of their specific social, economic, political and other conditions are important prerequisites for formulating a correct programme of rural work. A study of the psychological traits, ethnic and communal composition, customs and beliefs of the rural aggregate, is also indispensable for the purpose. Further, these groups and organizations require to have a concrete knowledge of the economic structure of the rural society, the specific system of land tenure prevailing in it, the various socio-economic groups bound up with its economy and with different and even conflicting interests, the religious and other ideologies which have a hold over their mind, the particular types of family and other social institutions existing there and many other things. Such knowledge is necessary because the task before them is not the renovation of a vague and vast rural society in general, but of a specific type of rural society; not the amelioration of the abstract rural people but of a particular rural people with local limits, defined past and crystallized present conditions.

It is, therefore, essential to study the particular rural society and its people in concrete details. Then alone, it is possible to evolve an appropriate programme of rural work for the recuperation of a particular rural society and the advance of the specific rural aggregate living in that society. Then alone, also, it is possible to locate the specific social, economic, psychological, ideological and other obstacles in the way of the fulfillment of that programme. A rural aggregate in Gujarat is different from that in Saurashtra, Bihar or Maharashtra.

Many individuals and organizations orienting to the work of rural reconstruction and uplift lack this understanding. They evolve naive programmes of rural work which, not being based on concrete detailed knowledge of the specific rural society and its people, fail or meet with partial success. This breeds the sentiment of defeatism among them and result sometimes in their abandoning of the rural work altogether.

(3) Lack Of Co-ordination Of Work

Lack of co-ordination of activities in various spheres marks the work of some organizations and groups. Further, their activities are often based on conflicting value systems.

This, too, is detrimental to the success of the programme. It is obvious that all activities should be co-ordinated and should constitute a single organic stream of total work. Also it is evident that a single principle must determine and permeate the diverse activities in diverse fields. Otherwise there will ensue mutual negating of activities.

(4) Insufficient Ability To Assess The Results

Some groups and organizations exhibit insufficient ability for a proper assessment of the results of their efforts in various domains of rural work. Since they have, therefore, no adequate conception of the cumulative result of their activities, they get a hazy notion regarding their advance towards their objective. Inability to properly evaluate their work in terms of productivity also denies them that power of self-criticism which is also vital for a correct planning of next stages of work.

When work is not properly planned and correctly assessed, there is also the danger of deviating from the correct road to the goal.

Sporadic and unplanned forms of rural welfare work are also sometimes launched. In a number of instances, they degenerate into

mere fads. This reveals unconscious lack of earnestness or absence of scientific understanding of the problem on the part of their sponsors. We find a mushroom growth of such efforts embarked upon by individuals and even institutions in the rural area. This tends to make the picture of the rural reconstruction work chaotic to some extent, and often leads the rural people to become victims rather then beneficiaries of such endeavours since they yield unstable and distorted results.

(5) Absence Of Proper Sociological Perspective

The principal weakness characterizing these organizations, however, generally lies in their lack of proper sociological understanding of the problem of rural reconstruction. To evolve a successful programme of rural reconstruction at a higher level, it is quite necessary to know the law governing the development of the rural society. The structure, the functioning and the objective tendencies of development of the existing rural society; the interconnectedness and the interdependence of various elements of that society (technical, economic, social, political, ideological); and the relative significance of those elements in determining the life of the rural society and their respective role in the total social change; require to be comprehended.

To change society consciously, we must have a science of society. Rural sociology is the science of rural society. The laws of the structure and development of rural society in general can aid us in discovering the special laws governing a particular rural society. Without the science of rural society, it is not, therefore, possible to get an authentic picture of a particular rural society. Rural sociology alone can provide a correct, organic, synthetic and multi-sided knowledge of a specific rural society and the tendency of its further evolution.

Rural Sociology, An Indispensable Guide

Rural sociology will help the rural worker to make a correct diagnosis of its ills and will, further, enable him to evolve a correct prescription or programme to overcome those ills. If the diagnosis of the ills is erroneous or imperfect, the prescription itself will be unscientific and therefore futile. The uninformed rural worker will adopt unhistorical and inappropriate means to cure the defects and deficiences of the rural social organism. The social ills may have a deep-seated cause in the very social system itself and may be merely symptoms proclaiming the general disease of the social organism. Not knowing this, the rural worker will engage himself in a symptomatic treatment of the social ills which, as all physicians know, gives no relief or gives only a partial and temporary relief.

There is another grave danger for a rural worker who is ignorant of rural sociology. The present social evils are the features of the present society and therefore cannot be overcome by methods adopted to cure the social evils of bygone societies. For instance, solutions of the evils of self-sufficient society would not be adequate for the solution of the maladies of the present competitive commodity society. If the rural worker is unaware of this fact, he will attempt to graft the former on the present society. He will recommend the resuscitation of the techniques, political systems or ethical concepts of the past societies to overcome the crisis of the present one. Such a view is unscientific. The evils of the present rural society arise out of its own inner structure and can be cured by means determined by its own trend of development.

The programme of rural reconstruction should be derived from a strict sociological analysis of the actual conditions and tendencies of the actually existing rural society and evaluation of the actual forces at work within it.

Here comes the decisive creative role of rural sociology which is as indispensable for the purpose of rural reconstruction as the science of medicine is to a medical practitioner.

FAO Pamphlet On Rural Welfare

The problem of rural reconstruction is vast and complex. We have presented in the second part of the book a series of tables worked out by FAO in the pamphlet published by it on the subject of rural welfare. The scheme suggested broadly classifies the entire problem of rural welfare in the following three sections:

(*a*) Elements in rural welfare.

(*b*) Determinants.

(*c*) Indicators of both elements and determinants of rural welfare.

The scheme outlined is not presented for its acceptance by the reader but only with a view to impress upon him how extensive the scope of the problem is, what numerous elements the rural society is composed of, what protean aspects the life of the rural people possesses and what multiple interconnections exist among those aspects. The scheme, whatever be its quality and value, will convince the reader of the necessity of a scientific study of the rural society.

Rural sociology, when it determines the programme of rural reconstruction, makes it scientific, conscious and organic, and therefore fruitful.

Rural sociology thereby becomes the indispensable guide to successful rural reconstruction.

CHAPTER XVI

CONCLUSION

Need For Rural Sociology

In conclusion a few observations may be made.

As observed at the outset, the study of rural society has become extremely urgent today when in a number of countries rural social structure is passing through an acute and even organic crisis; when its economy is rapidly disintegrating unfolding the perspective even of utter collapse; when social antagonisms and resultant conflicts between various social classes and groups comprising the rural humanity are being aggravated; in fact, when the rural social world is increasingly being transformed into a theatre of a far-reaching social revolution. In such a situation pregnant with mighty developments, it is the task of the rural sociologist to discover the law of development of rural society, to make a historico-theoretical analysis of that society and to locate the dynamics of its development.

Cognizance of the specific law of the development of the rural society is the basic prerequisite for its reconstruction. Its necessity for a correct grasp of the forces at work in the rural world in their interrelations and mutual interactions cannot be overstressed.

Only when the social programme and the social action undertaken in pursuance of that programme are based upon and guided by the scientific social theory, they are successful.

Present Volume, Its Aim

The present volume has the aim of, first, emphasizing the vital need of studying the life processes of the rural society analytically and synthetically and, secondly, suggesting some of the appropriate lines of approach for such a study.

An indication of the more significant among the various aspects of the rural life in their complex and variegated interconnections has been attempted here. Further, an effort has been made to point out how a composite picture of the multi-sided rural life process has yet to be built up.

Enormous research and theoretical labour are necessary to get a proper insight into the process of structural and functional transformations which the rural society has experienced in the past and the present. Such an insight is absolutely essential to assess the

specific weight and role of various factors whose action and mutual interactions have provided movement to the rural society in all times.

Only such a study of the past and present rural social structures can help to generalize the total movement of the rural society into a single law of its development. Then alone rural sociology can become a science. And then alone a scientific programme of the reconstruction of the rural society and a scientific plan for its realization can be evolved.

Though the task is herculean, disconcertingly baffling, there is no ground for pessimism. And that for a variety of reasons.

Growing Awareness Of The Problem

First, there is a growing awareness, on the part of the earnest section of the intelligentsia, of the urgency of the problem of the agrarian crisis and its solution. This section is increasingly realizing the futility, nay, even the harmful consequences, of sentimental, one-sided and other unscientific approaches to the problem. Such realization is generally the result of a deeper sociological investigation of the problem or of the practical failure of various plans of rural social reform or reconstruction.

Growing Literature On The Problem

Secondly, there has accumulated in recent times enormous statistical and other factual material providing illuminating information about the rural society, past and present. Individual scholars—historians, economists, sociologists, anthropologists—as well as governmental and non-governmental bodies have made studies of the various aspects of the rural life and published considerable literature on the subject. The existence of this literature implies that the precondition for the discovery of the law of evolution of the rural society, so vital for a correct approach to the problem of the present debacle of that society, has been appreciably created. The student of the rural society has, at his disposal, enormous and varied material for scientific analysis and conclusions.

There exist today such sources of rural information as the Imperial, Provincial and District Gazetteers, the Government Census Reports, the Settlement and Survey Reports, the Reports on the Castes and Tribes of India, the Economic and other Surveys by various Governmental bodies and Commissions, the Archeological, Linguistic and other Surveys, the yearly Economic, Political, Educational and other publications, the recent research studies of Bureaus of Statistics and Economics and others. These are some of the sources

of concrete information about the Indian rural life. With careful indexing and editing, this literature can be of great value.

The works published on the Indian rural society by numerous scholars, Indian and foreign, since the time of Sir Henry Maine, constitute still another source of information on the subject. They deal with various aspects of the Indian rural life. This group of writers includes eminent historians, economists, politicians, administrators, social reformers, anthropologists and sociologists. However, as we stated, no comprehensive scientific history of the Indian rural society tracing its origin and development in successive historical stages and dealing with various aspects of the rural life in reciprocal interaction and historical movement, has still been written. The works of these scholars will, however, prove of considerable value for preparing such a history.

The literature on the Indian rural life in general and on the rural economy in particular published by the Indian National Congress, the Kisan organizations and other political parties, though meagre, also provides useful data about the life conditions of the rural people. The information lies scattered and hence requires to be assembled, classified and co-ordinated, so that it can be utilized for building up a composite picture of the rural scene.

Another source of information is provided by the studies in the form of various theses on different rural problems prepared by students for the M.A. and Ph. D. degrees of various Indian Universities. The theses are the product of often strenuous study, inquiries, and field-work. A number of other educational and research agencies have also published literature on the subject.

The primary data gathered by various welfare organizations and welfare workers is also voluminous and, being based on case work, is detailed and living. These institutions and workers, however, generally make a purely empirical approach to the study of rural social phenomena. The material collected by them, hence, has to be sifted and generalized so that the historical tendency of the movement of the rural society can be detected.

The mass of material collected by the various above-mentioned agencies lies in an unorganized form. It has to be very carefully catalogued, classified, summarized and edited so that it could be made available in a coherent form to those who are exploring the laws of that society.

New groups and institutions are also springing in various parts of the country which have for their objective a thorough and detailed

study of our rural world. Some of these bring with them a new social outlook and adopt new methods of social research promising more fruitful results.

It is also necessary to refer to the growing literature on the rural society in the international world in recent decades. A part of this literature has a great theoretical and historical value. It deals with the genesis of the rural society and its transformation in different periods in a number of countries. A part of this literature is also devoted to the investigation of the existing rural societies in various countries. The student of Indian rural society may get useful theoretical hints and practical suggestions from a study of this literature for solving the Indian rural problems.

Its Insufficient And Lop-Sided Nature

It must, however, be noted that the literature on the rural society, international and Indian, is insufficient for an adequate understanding of the origin and development of the Indian society in the past and as it exists today with all its numerous provincial, district and local variants. While utilizing this literature, it is vitally necessary to organize further systematic field-studies of this society and its variants with a correct sociological approach. The basic defect characterising the existing literature is absence of a co-ordinated study of the various aspects of the rural life process in their reciprocal interactions. This is due to the weakness of the methodology used in the investigation.

Need For A Planned Research

An authentic picture of the Indian rural society, its origin, development and the existing state, can be built up only when a number of experts of different disciplines collaborate and synthesize the fruits of their labours in separate spheres of the rural life. It is the task of the rural sociologist to generalize the results of studies of the various experts at work on separate aspects of the rural life into a law of the movement of the rural society. Then alone an objectively true picture of the Indian society as a whole, its emergence and subsequent evolution through successive stages right up to the present, is also possible.

This alone can assist to visualize the problems arising from the crisis of the rural society in proper sociological perspective and evolve a correct programme of their solution. It will mean a programme of reconstruction of rural society in conformity with the real objective movement of the rural society and, therefore, lifting it to a higher level of material and cultural existence.

It is first necessary to evolve an all-India plan for the study of the rural society. An appropriate delimiting of rural zones should be made and a team of experts for each zone selected, who would organize a co-ordinated study of the various aspects of the rural society of that zone and evolve an integrated picture of that society. They can, then, study it historically, as the last link hitherto in the chain of the evolutionary series of the rural social structures of that zone which succeeded one another from stage to stage.

The study of the rural social structures of the different agrarian zones, of their origin and historical evolution, will pave the way for the study of the Indian rural society, its origin and historical evolution, as one organic whole.

Such a historical, co-ordinated and systematic study of the Indian rural society is the prime prerequisite for a scientific understanding of its life processes today and for evolving an adequate programme of its reconstruction on a more advanced economic, social and cultural basis.

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PART II

READINGS IN RURAL SOCIOLOGY

DEFINITION OF RURAL AND URBAN SOCIOLOGY*

By

P. A. SOROKIN and C. C. ZIMMERMAN

Rural Sociology as a Special Sociology.

Since rural sociology is a special branch of sociology, its tasks in its specific field are practically the same as those of general sociology. Correspondingly, the fundamental task of rural sociology is to describe the relatively constant and universal traits or relations of the rural social world as distinct from non-rural or urban social universe. In this description, rural sociology, like general sociology, concentrates its attention not at the traits which are peculiar to a given rural aggregate at a given time, but at the traits and relations which are typical for rural social world generally as distinct from urban social phenomena generally. In other words, rural sociology describes the rural-urban differences which are repeated in time and space and, in this sense, are constant characteristics of the rural in contradistinction from the urban social phenomena. On the other hand, rural sociology, in difference from agricultural economics and home economics, "rural political science," and any special social sciences dealing with rural problems, does not artificially isolate one side of the phenomena from others, and does not treat the objects studied as though they were "independent" from all other forces, factors, and conditions. It studies them in their complexity, intercorrelations, and interdependence with other phenomena. Through these two characteristics, rural sociology becomes different from farm management, agricultural economics, and any special science dealing with one aspect of the rural social universe. Rural sociology concerns every field in which the rural and urban social phenomena show or may show any tangible typical difference. Are the populations of the rural and urban aggregates different and if so, in what consists these relatively constant differences? Are the relationships between the social and the non-social phenomena (geographical and biological environment) the same in rural and urban aggregates? If not what are these relatively constant differences? Are the correlations between various kinds of social phenomena the same in the rural and urban social aggregates? If they show a difference, in what does it consist? In brief, rural sociology must study and formulate all

*Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology by P. A. Sorokin and C. C. Zimmerman, Chapter 1, pp. 8-10, Copyrighted in 1929, Henry Holt & Company, Inc.

the important—and at least relatively constant—differences in any field of rural and urban social phenomena.

The second fundamental task of rural sociology is "to explain" these differences or the specific traits of rural social phenomena. The explanation would consist of an indication of the factors responsible for these differences, or in the establishment of the functional correlations between such and such specific differences and such and such "independent" or "dependent variables". If general sociology were well developed the "explanatory" work would have represented a mere application of the causal or functional formulas of general sociology to a given problem of rural sociology. The formulas of general sociology in their application to the rural phenomena would have played the role of algebraic formulas in their application to given problems of arithmetic. In those cases where general sociology presents formulas and well defined social laws, the interpreting part of rural sociology represents nothing but an application of these formulas to the rural problem. Unfortunately, however, general sociology in many fields does not have, as yet, such more or less well tested and valid generalization. For this reason, in many problems of rural sociology, an investigator is forced to make an original analysis and, single-handed, to find the factors responsible for a given difference or to establish new correlations as yet unknown to general sociology. In this form, if the new correlation is valid, a rural sociologist not only solves his own problem but also enriches general sociology. Such material relationships are often found in the general and special branches of any science. General biology helps its special branches (botany or zoology) and the progress of these branches enriches and improves general biology.

The above two fundamental tasks of rural sociology practically exhaust its field and contents. They embrace any particular problem of rural sociology. Many believe that the practical advice regarding the improvement or reconstruction of "rural life" is the chief purpose of rural sociology. But this task logically lies far beyond the field of rural sociology as a theoretical science. It belongs to *an applied rural social technology.* It is evident that such a rural social technology can be efficient or "scientific" only when we have developed a really scientific theoretical rural sociology and other related sciences (chemistry, biology, botany, agricultural economics, and so on). All these and many more are an indispensable basis for any applied technology, including the rural social technology. Without the development of the theoretical rural sociology there can be no "scientific rural social technology" in so far as it tries to improve the social aspects of rural aggregates and rural life. Without it there can be

only such blind and often objectively harmful "clamor" and "reforming" which is so loudly proclaimed *urbi et orbi* by crowds of incompetent "reformers" and "ignoramuses".

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY*

By

C. C. TAYLOR

Sociology is the study of people and their group relationships. Rural sociology is the study of rural people and their social relationships with one another and with nonrural people. It is, in short, the sociology of rural life. This does not mean that the rural sociologist is different from all other sociologists, or uses different scientific methods. To make scientific studies in the laboratory of rural life requires use of the same methods of investigation and analysis as are used in other sociological studies. All sociologists are concerned with the same basic types of human relations and social processes and many of the same social problems.

Everyone lives by means of social relationships and wants to understand them, and sociologists deal with the theories people have about their social relationships with others. Some popular explanations of human behaviour and social relations contain great wisdom, but some of them are very colored, prejudiced, and even false. Scientific sociological explanations may not be perfect either, but they are not colored or prejudiced because they are more nearly objective and are based on the maximum information that is available on each phenomena or situation being discussed.

It is not easy to make scientific analysis of social relationships. They are both complex and changeable and no social science can be as exact as a physical or even a biological science. Much of it, in fact, is little more than an accurate description of social situations. Thus a part of the science of rural sociology is based on detailed descriptions by persons who have made careful and repeated observations of important situations, problems, and processes in rural life. In many cases this knowledge cannot be presented in any more precise form than that of accurate description but this is not always a weakness, for accurate description is the first step in analysis. It is highly desirable, however, that the succeeding steps be an analysis of social relations in order to form conclusions about them, with the validity of scientific knowledge.

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*Rural Life in the United States by C. C. Taylor, A. F. Raper, Douglas Ensminger, M. J. Hagood, T. W. Longmore, W. C. McKaim Jr., L. J. Ducoff, E. A. Schuler, pp. 4-6, copyrighted in 1949, Alfred A. Knopf Inc.

Yet it is not the sole or even the prime purpose of rural sociology to be merely scientific. Its purpose is to help people understand themselves and one another. Indeed, neither general nor rural sociology would exist if common people and their leaders were not anxious to have a better comprehension of social relations and social problems. Rural sociology has developed in response to definite demands for this better understanding. Some ten years ago Sanderson, Lively, Nelson, and Taylor made an analysis of the history and evolution of rural social research. In this carefully written report on the history and content of rural sociology they said: "The primary aim of rural sociology is the improvement of the social conditions of the people on the land. It originated as a discipline in teaching and research as a part of the general impulse to improve American agriculture technologically, economically and socially."

Rural sociology attempts to assist in this improvement by means of research, college courses, and adult education. As much of the subject matter as possible is based on the findings of fields studies, on statistical analysis of farm and rural populations, and on all other data that are available, from whatever valid source. The motives of improvement and reform are stimuli to research and need not in any way compromise the objectivity of such research. In fact, if they did, there would probably be very little demand for social research, because the results would not be trusted. As it is, rural sociologists are called on by others to do research and to assist in action programs because it is belived that they will maintain a high degree of objectivity in studying even the most troublesome problem. In the recent severe depression, for instance, when for the first time in the history of the nation, hundreds of thousands of rural people were placed on relief, rural-sociology researchers were called in to study the situation and to help formulate and administer relief, rehabilitation, and resettlement programs. They have since been used increasingly by rural agencies and institutions to assist them in shaping objectives and in making valid analyses of the problems and processes with which they deal. Moreover, persons preparing for professional work in rural areas—teachers, ministers, and even lawyers and physicians—now study rural sociology as a part of their professional training; rural welfare workers, although not so numerous as welfare workers in cities, are now preparing themselves for professional social work in rural areas. As long as rural sociology continues to analyse rural social situations objectively and to apply the findings to active programs, it will develop with increasing acceleration and grow in usefulness.

THE FIELD OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY*

By

N. L. SIMS

The field of rural sociology is the study of association among people living by or immediately dependent upon agriculture. Open country and village grouping and group behaviour, as distinguished from larger urban aggregates and their behaviour, are its concern. Society, whether rural or urban, has common elements that must always be considered. These are the people and their culture. The latter is commonly subdivided into the material and non-material. The non-material may again be divided into several types. For our purposes two may be designated. The first we shall call the *Structural*, meaning thereby organization by position or location which gives forms of settlement and community types. The second we shall refer to as *Institutional*, signifying organization resulting from functional relations, or the behaviour patterns that arise from the pursuit of life interests. Thus this work will treat of the *Structural*, the *Vital*, the *Material*, the *Institutional*, and the *Processual* phases of rural society.

The fact that these phases vary both quantitatively and qualitatively and have different modes of combination makes the differences between societies. Wherefore, there are differences between rural and urban society, and hence a rural as distinguished from an urban sociology.

Rural sociology cannot, of course, ignore these common elements, as they relate to society in general, including urban society. In fact, at its present stage of immaturity, overmuch attention is given to the contrasting features of urban life and rural life. Properly speaking, this is comparative sociology rather than distinctively rural sociology. Be it so, it is the best that can be offered under present circumstances. (pp. 13-14).

Some Requirements for a Pure Science of Rural Sociology

As with sociology in general, *the first requirement* is a clear concept of what society is, and of how sociology is to be delimited. Sociologists do not always agree on these points, but most of them understand society to mean the phenomena of human grouping and collective behaviour, and sociology to be the study of that grouping as such.

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*Elements of Rural Sociology by N. L. Sims, pp. 13, 14, 19-20, 21, 22, copyrighted in 1946, Thomas Y. Crowell Company.

In addition to a clear concept of sociology, *a second requirement* for a pure science is a unitary approach to the study of group behavior. If, moreover, a comprehensive sociology is to follow, this viewpoint also must be comprehensive. (p. 19)

Little more can be done than to point the way along which a pure sociology of country life can be developed. As yet the data out of which to create it are not available.

Wherefore, *a third requisite* for a rural sociology is more scientific knowledge. This is being gathered, but the task of accumulating it is peculiarly slow and difficult. Compact urban groups with many organizations keeping records lend themselves to study with comparative ease. But not so country life; it can be made to give up sufficient facts from its far-flung and varied areas only if organized agencies spend much money and effort in surveys. Fortunately, many agencies are now engaged at the task. Eventually we may hope for enough facts to make possible a real science of rural sociology. (p. 20)

Rural sociology cannot ignore the interactions of urban and rural culture. Standards are inevitably set by the more dynamic and effective social groups. This has made the urban the pacemaking group of the Great Society. Consciously and unconsciously, the rural is being measured and judged by its norms, and at the same time the rural group is tending more and more to accept these criteria. Rural education, religion, morals, health, business, work and recreation are all being subjected to the testing of urban standards.

The result is rural urbanization. Rural sociology, insofar as it attempts to be a science of group life, will consider its adequacy and in a measure approve the urbanizing process, since it can scarcely view isolation, retardation, impuissance, or whatever is indicative of cultural inferiority with favor. It will also be critical of the urbanizing influence insofar as it overrides and destroys certain elements of rural civilization. However, insofar as rural sociology approximates a pure science, it will be indifferent to everything except the social processes themselves. These it will describe, noting the similarities and differences between their operation under urban and under rural conditions, observing the reciprocal effects of city and country upon each other, and, above all, analyzing the phenomenon of community life among country dwellers. (p. 22).

AN APPROACH TO RURAL SOCIOLOGY*

By

P. H. LANDIS

Any text which tries to describe a field as comprehensive as that covered by rural sociology, a science which attempts to understand the social environment, social activities, and interactive processes of a major sector of the American population, must of necessity select a point of emphasis, for no one book can begin to cover with any degree of completeness all the important phases of the social experience of a group of people in as complex a social system, cultural structure, and institutional arrangement as exist in America.

In selecting a point of orientation one has several alternatives from which to choose, as a citation to certain authorities will demonstrate. In 1937 a group of leading rural sociologists began a study to learn the outstanding contributions of rural sociological research and to formulate a statement of what they believed to be the most fruitful field for research in the future. In their report, which was completed in 1938, they have the following to say with regard to the field of rural sociology:

"Sociology is the description of the forms of human association, the factors influencing the origin, development, structure, and functioning of these various forms, and of their cultural products. Rural sociology is the study of these forms of association in the rural environment, and describes their differences from the relations to those of towns and cities. By "forms of association" are meant all describable types of human association, whether they be institutions, community or neighbourhood organizations, cultural patterns, or trade or class organizations. By "the origin, development, and functioning of these forms" are meant the conditions under which, and the processes by which, different forms of human association have come into existence, tend to maintain their existence, and function in relation to their own life processes and the environment in which they exist."

Obviously, this statement is comprehensive and inclusive.

John M. Gillette, author of the first textbook in rural sociology, both in the organization of the latest edition of his book and in his

*Rural Life in Process by P. H. Landis, pp. 18-20, copyrighted in 1948, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc.

definition of rural sociology, emphasizes a more specialized theme. He believes that the central idea of rural sociology is the "results ensuing from the adjustment to the land" for such adjustment is "paramount in national and rural life, or at least of first-rate importance."

C. C. Zimmerman believes that the central concept of rural sociology is "the mechanisms and effects of urbanization and ruralization upon a population." He says, "We cannot go far wrong if we make urbanization and ruralization, its social mechanisms, causes and effects, the central point of discovery for a science of rural sociology."

In line with Zimmerman's view, the writer considers that urbanization is a major force in rural society today and that the effect of urbanization in all its implications upon both urban and rural society should be a major interest of sociologists. That it should be the central interest of rural sociology may not be universally accepted but all who have fingers on the pulse of rural life will agree that it is one of the most important, if not the most important, centres of interest of rural sociological science.

Barnes suggests that urbanization of rural life virtually creates a new epoch in human history. He says,

"The relative decline in the importance of rural life and the urbanization of that which lingers on certainly constitutes one of the major turning points in the cultural and institutional history of mankind. The reduction of rural life and institutions to a subordinate position in Western civilization has veritably introduced a new epoch in human history."

By urbanization I suppose we mean primarily the tendency of life to become more formalized in its system of social control, more mechanized in its material aspects, more artificial in its environmental setting in that inventions become more prominent and nature phenomena less prominent, more impersonal in its social relationships in that social organization becomes more systematic and less spontaneous.

RURAL-URBAN DIFFERENCES*

By

N. L. SIMS

Rural sociology cannot, of course, ignore these common elements, as they relate to society in general, including urban society. In fact, at its present stage of immaturity, overmuch attention is given to the contrasting features of urban and rural life. Properly speaking, this is comparative sociology rather than distinctively rural sociology. Be it so, it is the best that can be offered under present circumstances. Inasmuch as the emphasis tends to be comparative, it may be well at this point to sketch some of the outstanding differences between urban and rural society. To do this will anticipate to some degree what will appear at many angles in subsequent chapters of this book, but it will also facilitate the student's understanding of what the rural field includes. Let it be noted that in pointing out the differences, we shall have in mind distinctly American conditions.

1. There are differences in the *composition* of urban and rural groups. Numerically the city presents masses in congested areas, the country small numbers in relative isolation. The age and sex distribution is not the same. Nor are the two ethnically alike. The city is heterogeneous in its racial elements, while the country is normally fairly homogeneous. In mental quality and physical stamina other divergences appear. Nor do men associate in the same manner. Urban contacts differ from rural both in quantity and quality. In the one case they are frequent, transient, and formal; in the other, relatively seldom, but full, intimate, and regularly recurring. Rural association is familial, communal, primary and comparatively permanent, but urban is individual, secondary, and more largely functional.

2. In *cultural heritage* the city has almost infinite variety and richness, whereas the country has more sameness and poverty. There are hundreds of urban occupations, techniques, and pursuits of a widely divergent nature, against a score or so closely related ones in the average rural community. There are many urban codes of behaviour, whereas over wide areas the country tends to support but a single one.

3. The *wealth* of the city is relatively unlimited compared with that of rural areas. The bulk of it is intangible and fluid, in contrast

*Elements of Rural Sociology by N. L. Sims, pp. 14-15, copyrighted in 1946, Thomas Y. Crowell Company.

to the tangible and fixed form wealth assumes in the country. Distribution in the city runs to extremes and shows glaring disparity, but in the country it strikes a low average and tends to equality.

4. Urban *structure* is multiple and complex, but the rural is more limited and simple. The latter is more territorially determined, while the former is based largely on interests. The activities of urban groups are highly organized but those of rural are often informal. The city dweller cannot escape conformity to structure; the country dweller hardly needs to give heed to it at all.

From these differences and the combinations to which they give rise, it must be clear that urban and rural society are unlike, and their sociologies, perforce, more or less distinct.

RURAL SOCIETY*

By

C. C. ZIMMERMAN

RURAL SOCIETY as compared with urban society is marked by a relative predominance of the agricultural occupations, by the closeness of the people to a natural as contrasted with a human environment, by the smallness of its communal aggregates, by a relatively sparse population, by greater social homogeneity, by less internal differentiation and stratification and by less territorial, occupational and vertical social mobility of the population. The individual in rural society as a rule has fewer contacts with others, he associates with people from smaller geographic and social area, a greater proportion of his social contacts are face to face and his relationships with any particular individual tend to have a longer duration. The people of rural society live in systems of organization which tend to include a higher proportion of status as contrasted with contract relationships; they are bound to a greater extent by organic ties rather than by the co-operation made necessary by economic division of labor.

Rural society has been variously defined as comprising all persons residing in the open country or all persons connected directly with agricultural occupations or all persons residing in administrative units of less than a given size. In Europe, local units having a population of fewer than 2000 persons are defined as rural; the United States census first regarded as rural towns and villages of fewer than 8000, including the open country; later all persons residing in the open country and in communities of fewer than 4000, subsequently of 2500, were classified as rural inhabitants. As a provincial city of 25,000 people, however, may be more akin to rural society than to urban, whereas a smaller aggregate may belong more to the urban world, it is preferable to define rural society typologically rather than statistically.

The distinguishing economic, social and political characteristics of rural society are derived from its relationship to the land, from which most of its inhabitants make their living. The diet and the living conditions of rural areas are closely related to their land products and therefore tend to be regional and to be affected primarily by natural calamities, such as famines. Rural politico-social classes

*Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, Volumes 13-14, pp. 469-71, article by C. C. Zimmerman, copyrighted in 1948, Macmillan Company.

are those related to the control of land as contrasted with the greater orientation of the urban political social system about personal and movable property, material display and human groups. Vertical social mobility in rural society is connected with movements up and down the scale from landlessness to the position of a landlord. A conflict of classes may develop within the society on the basis of landownership: small landowners against large, tenants against landlords, hired labourers against owners of estates. Agrarian radicalism has historically been closely connected with land rights, as illustrated in the history of China and recently in the Mexican peasant movement following 1912, in the revolution in Russia, in the peasant movements in central Europe following the World War and in the farmers' holidays in the United States that resulted from the foreclosures of mortgages after the crisis which began in 1929. The importance of land rights is also shown by the nature of voting in rural societies where legislation is by popular referendum.

Oriental society has been historically more rural than has western society, with the exception of the period following the decline of Roman culture when Islam and China were probably more urban than was western society organized around Constantinople. Rural society declined in relative importance in the Mediterranean region between the time of the conquests of Alexander the Great and the reign of Constantine and also in modern times in Europe and in the United States. This decline has been reflected only numerically, in the proportion of people living under rural conditions, for the greater development of urban society as a rule enabled the rural population to increase and to have higher material standards than during the times in which rural society was relatively more predominant. The lines of distinction between rural and urban society are now less marked in Europe and in the Americas than in the Orient, because of the commercialization of agriculture and the more mobile populations of the former areas; a few kilometers from the oriental centres of urban society, such as Tokyo, Shanghai, Bangkok or Bombay, one still encounters a different world. Variations within rural society depend upon whether the region is a pioneer fringe, a settled community or an immediate urban hinterland. The pioneer fringes which existed in the United States between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries or in northern Europe in the Middle Ages varied considerably from the older settled regions or the market gardens, suburban estates and other types of rural society to be found around the large cities. The agricultural possibilities of the soil determine to some extent the character of the rural community. For instance, the rural society on the eastern plains of England has always differed

considerably from that in the more hilly sections of Wales. The manorial system of England, as it developed after the invasions of the Romans and the other foreign groups in the Middle Ages was considerably different from the more self-sufficing tribal and family economy to be found in the western part of the country.

The economic characteristics of a relatively isolated society develop around its regional self-sufficiency. The family tends to manufacture much of its own goods; what it does not make is generally produced by artisans who reside in the villages or in the nearest communities. Industry and agriculture are so little divided that it is extremely difficult to separate the occupations from each other, unless one considers the task alone and not the individuals. Even the local leaders, who carry on the functions of religion, medicine, art and government, participate in one way or another in the direct activities of agriculture. Extremes of conspicuous consumption or of pauperization do not often become as apparent as in urban society. Rural societies that are less isolated from the urban world have economies more closely approximating urban economy. Trading towns and villages which replace temporary and periodic marketing places of the peasants become the centres of rural social life. Banks and money economy increase; prices are quoted in units of currency based upon a standard measure, and credit begins to play a production rather than merely a consumption role. Peasants who formerly borrowed money from relatives largely in their own village borrow for economic purposes from moneylenders at high interest rates. During the period of change from the pure rural society to the urbanized rural society much property passes into the hands of non-agriculturists, and the inevitable result is antagonism and conflict between the social classes. This antagonism is enhanced when the moneylenders, who come from the urban society, are of a different race, as in the case of the Sikh moneylenders in India and the Chinese or Annamese traders among the people of Malay origin. As the society becomes an urbanized rural aggregate commercial banking appears, and later rural banks tend to be absorbed by urban banks; technological changes influence agriculture and rural society suffers from the economic fluctuations of urban society. In rural regions where agriculture has become essentially capitalistic, as in some parts of the United States and in the plantation areas of the tropics, the class struggle assumes a form comparable to that of industrial societies.

Contact with urban life facilitated by improvement in transportation leads to the use of readymade garments and other urban commodities. Houses are not as frequently built and roofed with

native materials as before; instead lumber and other building supplies are purchased from traders. Culture and language symbols become more national and less local; urban fads, fashions and styles permeate the rural society; economic division of labor increases and illiteracy tends to diminish. Educational, hygienic, technical or economic public services improve but rarely come to be as advanced or as numerous in rural societies as they are in corresponding urban societies.

Regional cultures arise out of the local environment, the inventions of the people and the selectivity of traits which rural society secures from the urban. It is difficult to determine how much of a specific rural culture is indigenous to the country and how much of it is selected from past generations of urban influence. Rural art is manifested in domestic articles, in religious images and in festivities such as folk songs, dances and games; in the more purely rural societies each village is often recognized by the type of cloth that is woven there, each region by the type of articles which it wears. In commercialized rural societies, however, these distinctive characteristics disappear as part of the standardization process which results from the general movement of cultural interchange between rural and urban communities. The migration to the cities of the younger generation and of many families has tended to break down the vitality of the social life of the rural communities. The economic crisis beginning in 1929 led to a decided movement, in the United States as in other parts of the world, from the cities back to the country; this return movement has tended further to efface the differences between rural and urban cultures.

The judgment of Siegfried, Demangeon and others that agglomerated village types of rural societies have a different kind of culture from those with isolated farm homes is doubtful, for there is little difference between the cultures of the isolated families and the village families when both operate under the same conditions. Among the important factors in the increase of the isolated farm homes in western society are the amount of land available and the economic rationalization of agricultural economy. Whatever differences in culture are found may be ascribed to these factors rather than to the location of the home, because grouped villages tend to take on the same cultural changes as do isolated farms when the trend of rural society is toward commercialized culture.

AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH TO RURAL SOCIETY*

By

ALVIN BOSKOFF

Rural society, considered as a whole or in terms of its constituent parts, has been particularly amenable to an ecological approach. Such spatially charged concepts as "the rural neighbourhood", "the rural community", "locality group structure", and "rural migration" have consequently become major focal points in rural sociology, a field in which ecological considerations are at the very least *implicit* in many studies. It is the purpose of this paper to explore these ecological undertones and to propose a preliminary outline of a systematic ecological approach to rural phenomena.

At the outset, however, it seems distinctly relevant to dissociate ourselves as clearly as possible from certain implicit biases and theoretical inhibitions of rural sociology, and at the same time to clear away some of the theoretical debris which has stubbornly clung to "orthodox" human ecology for twenty years. Both situations are largely responsible for the lack of a fruitful ecological approach to rural problems.

As far as rural sociology is concerned, there has developed a defensive, empiricist frame of reference derived from an enforced concern with the more local, immediate rural problems (neighbourhood and community organization, specific institutional problems, local population movements, land tenure problems). This "practical" emphasis has tended to isolate rural problems from the larger social context in which they actually appear. As a result, rural phenomena have been unduly polarized in a theoretical distortion of the increasingly apparent rural-urban continuum.

A relatively more serious deterrent to an ecological approach lies in the analogical theory and inadequate concepts of "orthodox" human ecology. It is first manifested in such definitions of human ecology as the study of "relationships of *symbiosis*, or the factors involved in living together, *independent of communication*", "those *impersonal, subsocial* aspects of communal structure—both spatial and functional—which arise and change as the result of interaction between men *through the medium of limited supplies of the environment.*"

*RURAL SOCIOLOGY—December 1949—Vol. 14; No. 4; pp. 306-316; Article by Alvin Boskoff.

This orientation involves certain theoretical and conceptual difficulties which must be clarified and resolved before human ecology can win a merited position in the social sciences. A revisionist position seems to demand five major changes. First "ecological interaction" must be modified to remove the tenacious remnants of a mystic subsocial spatial determinism carelessly torn from the context of social behaviour. The false association between "the impersonal" and "the subsocial", for example, disregards a whole wealth of competent sociological investigation on secondary groups, bureaucracy, and rationalization.

Second, the concept of a pervasive, primordial competition in the determination of position must face the reality of socially structured spatial distribution.

Third, human ecology must surrender, the *laissez faire* bias which views society as a natural unit "whose ties are those of a *free and natural economy* based on division of labour." It should look more closely at the cultural differentiation of power and its effects on the special distribution of groups and functions.

Fourth, the orthodox ecological approach tends to evade the rigors of explicit theorizing with the result that stray, unanalysed fragments (competition, the subsocial, the struggle for existence) are employed to fill the explanatory gap. Consequently, orthodox ecology has remained largely descriptive, despite attempts to reach the analytical level through the study of ecological processes. Dominance, concentration, centralization, invasion, succession and segregation are largely descriptive terms whose ultimate explanation for the ecologist has continually been some variant of "competition", the basic datum of that orthodox ecology.

Fifth, human ecology seems to have concentrated its study on relatively circumscribed ecological areas (the community, the natural area, the neighbourhood) and has generally neglected analysis of (1) such larger areas as the frontier, the region, and the national society and of (2) the relations between different types of ecological structures. This isolation of ecological units may have been advisable in the early growth of ecology, but it can no longer be justified.

Perhaps the major difficulty of human ecology is its ambivalent position in sociology. It is, of course, a border line discipline, with obviously competing orientations. At present its phenomena form a kind of residual category; the socially undirected distribution of populations and functions. But if "human ecology stands or falls upon its ability to simplify and clarify the impersonal subsocial as-

pects of communities and regions," as Quinn asserts, then the only conclusion to be drawn is that it has already fallen. For in seeking a distinctive set of phenomena, orthodox human ecology has not only seceded from modern sociology—it has largely withdrawn from science.

But there is a sense in which the ecological approach remains valid, despite the inadequacies of its early theory and concepts. Human ecology (or social ecology or cultural ecology—or, it is suggested, sociological ecology) can become a useful adjunct to general sociology if the preceding cautions are heeded. It can provide a needed spatial frame of reference for sociology to aid in the *location* of the social phenomena with which it is concerned.

Obviously, this newer perspective involves a redefinition of the scope and theoretical framework of ecology. *Sociological ecology* can be defined as the description, analysis, and explanation of the spatial and temporal adjustment of social organizations (groups and functions) through social behaviour and relationships in pursuit of cultural values. The concept of *ecological adjustment,* which is prominent in Mukerjee's ecological writings, logically belongs in this framework, though this concept still requires a good deal of clarification. Two major considerations enter at this point: (1) the criteria of adjustment or adequacy in any given ecological structure; (2) the *context* or level of ecological adjustment. The latter consideration is particularly important since it points to the need for assessing the relations between ecological structures.

However, it is not the intent of this paper to present a detailed theoretical structure of the modern ecological approach in sociology. The remainder of this paper will be devoted to a brief analysis of a series of ecological structures through which we can understand the status of our rural population. We shall, therefore, discuss the following structures: the rural neighbourhood, the plantation, the rurban community, the rurban region, the national society and finally, the world trade community. And in conclusion, we shall try to clarify the implications of this approach for rural sociology, ecological theory, and planning.

ECOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS OF 'RURAL' SOCIETY

The simplest ecological unit in rural society is, for our purposes, the rural neighbourhood, which is perhaps best defined as "the primary area of neigbouring for a group of relatively homogeneous families." Structurally, the rural neighbourhood is generally based on proximity of farm families; but it is important to note that proxi-

mity coupled with some organizing function or institution are the twin bases of the neighbourhood. Informal relations, such as work-exchange, and inter-family visiting, have been integrating factors in neighbourhood life, though they have lost much of their original strength. However, the cross-roads schools, the church, the retail store, nationality groupings, social clubs, agricultural extension projects, etc., still exert a cohesive influence in locality groups.

The ecological character of the rural neighbourhood is a product of a long cultural tradition which is especially reflected in rural attitudes towards land division, farm size, and in the character of land tenure. Land division has been predominantly in the checkerboard pattern: in the traditional mile-square sections which trace back to 1787. Since farmsteads have generally been located near the centre of these squares—farm management considerations being paramount—this type of land division minimizes proximity of farm families and therefore has tended to be a deterrent to the emergence and persistence of rural neighbourhoods. Yet the rural neighbourhood, with regional variations, was for a long time a reality in rural social organization—a fact which underscores the role of localized institutions in developing neighbourhoods. Now there is some evidence of the emergence of a new settlement pattern among farmers in the irrigated areas of Washington and Oregon. Farmers in that area have indicated a preference for "corner communities" (actually neighbourhoods) or rectangular farm holdings with farmsteads located on common service roads.

We may point to a process of ecological adjustments achieved by the rural neighbourhood in two ways. First, in areas which have developed one or more villages or towns as efficient service centres, in addition to allweather roads and transportation facilities, the rural neighbourhood has lost a great deal of its autonomy and has become submerged in an emergent rurban community. Second, in areas where rural neighbourhoods are located at appreciable distances from village or town centres and from major transportation routes; in which these neighbourhoods have developed and maintained one or more satisfactory institutional functions (school, church, retail store); the rural neighbourhood has tended to persist. On the one hand, it has yielded to a larger ecological structure; on the other, it has preserved a measure of ecological immunity.

It is rather difficult to determine an appropriate position in our series of ecological structures for the plantation, which is significant as a regional survival. The larger plantations may be said to constitute a particular form of "rural community", while smaller plan-

tations may be likened to rural neighbourhoods in that they are units of a more inclusive rurban community. Despite this ambiguity of ecological classification, however, the plantation is fairly definite in structure and functional organization.

There is some difficulty as well in defining "plantation" distinctively. We shall refer to the plantation as the private organization of the cultivation of large tracts of land for the production of staple commodities intended for the world market, the labour being supplied by five or more tenant families. With this delimitation accepted, we find that plantations develop nucleated structures, with the landlord's home centrally located and with the tenants' shacks situated along a planned network of roads. The land is characteristically apportioned into use categories; woodland, wasteland, pasture, cropland (the landlord's personal cropland being located near the centre of the plantation, and idle land which can be brought into cultivation in accordance with price prospects. Two final elements in the plantation structure are the quarters for wage hands, situated for convenience near the landlord's home, and in some cases an embryonic community centre in the form of a school and a church in a distant corner of the plantation.

A more complex ecological structure in the series under consideration is the rurban community—also called the rural community and the village-centred community. This has tended to be the focal structure of rural sociology, though it is, strictly speaking, not wholly a rural structure. It may be defined as a configuration of rural neighbourhood and sub-neighbourhood units about one or more villages or towns whose service functions integrate the residents into a recognizable structural entity.

Rurban communities, it must be recognized, are no longer the simple structures which Galpin delineated in his pioneer work over thirty years ago. They tend to be poly-nucleated or multiple-village—centred structures which involve a discernible division of labour among component service centres. Thus Hoffer has distinguished three types of trade centres in the rurban community: (1) the primary centre—the nearest trade centre, usually a hamlet with a grocery store and filling-station; (2) the intermediate centre of about 1,000 population, containing some speciality stores; (3) the terminal trade centre which has all the trade and service facilities, a family is likely to need.

The key element in the rurban community is, of course, the population centre—village or town. Perhaps the primary function of the village is its role as a commercial intermediary between the

farm and the factory. In addition, the village—and more particularly, the town—provides educational, professional, and social services for the farm population. The vitality of the village, manifested by the variety of functions performed and the area of effective influence, is largely dependent on population size, regional location, agricultural organization, transportation, and relative proximity to larger centres.

It is important to conceive of the rurban community as an *emergent*, as a yet barely recognizable *structuring* of social and commercial relationships in the process of articulation around differentially specialized focal centres. However, what it lacks in sharpness of delimitation is compensated by a wider variety of services and social contacts than the rural neighbourhood can afford. Moreover, the rurban community constitutes the first stage of ecological contact between the farm resident and urban values in a social order which is becoming increasingly dominated by an octopal urbanism.

The rurban community and the rural neighbourhood (where it exists) may be considered basic units in the rurban region, which is at present largely a figment of the ecological imagination. Region as a general concept has been difficult to locate unambiguously, because it has been utilised by a number of disparate frames of reference: physiographic, botanical, climatic, economic, political and administrative, cultural, etc. It is, however, strange to discover, that a concept possessing such rich ecological implications has failed to receive serious, systematic ecological definition and interpretation.

For our purposes, it is perhaps best to define the rurban region as a configuration of roughly contiguous rurban communities possessing *similar* and *complementary* spatio-functional-adjustment characteristics. But are these component communities merely *comparable segments* artificially encompassed by a concept or do they contain some degree of organic interrelationship—either directly, or with reference to some organizing centre? Because of the novelty of this approach to the region—and the consequent paucity of relevant data —there is enormous room for speculation at this point. However, a choice between these two alternative conceptions would seem to be an *empirical problem* demanding an extensive programme of inter-community studies received in the frame of reference suggested by this paper.

Should further empirical work fail to establish an organic unity among comparable communities (as defined above), we should be forced to recognize the sprawling concept "region", from the ecological standpoint, simply as a verbal convenience corresponding to no ob-

jectively ascertainable entity. On the other hand, if we can discover a functional interrelationship among a number of contiguous communities, we shall have constructed a firm basis for the retention and use of a meaningful regional conception.

Delimitation of rurban regions, assuming the validity of our ecological approach to regions, presents rather imposing difficulties. The smallest unit thus far employed in devising a rurban regional classification is the county, which is not an ecologically defined unit. A proper regional (and sub-regional) analysis would require the demarcation of rurban communities throughout the nation and their segregation according to appropriate regional and sub-regional correlates. Such an undertaking assumes enormous proportions, but it does not seem beyond the competence of the State Colleges of Agriculture and the U. S. Department of Agriculture, assuming that adequate funds were appropriated by the Congress.

What could be considered to be appropriate regional correlates? Obviously, they would involve indices which perform one or both of two functions: (1) determination of comparable communities and (2) determination of the functional organization of these communities. Consequently, the factors of ecological significance in determining rurban regions and sub-regions might reasonably include the following, many of which were used by Mangus in his *Rural Regions of the United States*:

1. Type of agriculture and land use.
2. Extent and amount of part time farming.
3. Level of living (including electricity, telephone, auto).
4. Rate of natural increase.
5. Proportion of immigrant residents.
6. Migration trends.
7. Tenancy.
8. Race.
9. Religion.
10. Per cent of farm produce consumed on farms.
11. Proportion of specific services obtained from presumed regional centres.

Regional indices, however, fail to supply an adequate picture of the differentiation of regions in general, of rurban regions in particular. A clue to this process probably lies in the fact of discernible agricultural specialization which, as McKenzie suggests, is made possible by the extension of the market through communication and transportation developments. Rurban regions and sub-regions may

then be said to be differentiated according to the type and degree of specialization for domestic and foreign markets.

Thus far, we have considered ecological frameworks with respect to the rural population in terms of a graduated ecological progression: rural neighbourhood, plantation, rurban community, rurban region. Yet these by no means exhaust the significant ecological spheres within which agriculture and the rural population may be said to operate. We shall therefore turn briefly to the national society and the world trade community as two broad but highly important ecological contexts.

The national society is not merely a conceptualization of a simple rural-urban distribution. It involves a highly complex interplay of functions between and among rurban and metropolitan regions within the confines of a national political and economic order. It may therefore be defined ecologically as a configuration of rurban regions and sub-regions about one or more metropolitan regions, characterized by a highly developed division of social labour.

The basic structural element in the national society is not primarily the actual location of constituent units, but rather the *balance* which derives from the relative distribution of population and functions. The nature of this balance is ecologically of the highest importance, since it is reflected in the functional inter-relationships of component ecological units. Therefore, let us consider the manner in which this interrelationship operates.

Rurban and metropolitan regions have developed through a reciprocal interchange of complementary functions, without which an organized social order could not endure. The former supply surplus food and fibre which make possible large aggregations of groups devoted to the fulfilment of non-agricultural functions. More important, they furnish surplus population to replenish the metropolitan regions, which are characterized by low capacity for self-replacement. In addition, rurban regions offer during normal times a huge market for non-agricultural goods and services. Finally, rurban regions may be said to contribute a dubious stability in the form of traditional attitudes toward political organization and objectives, domestic economy, and international relations.

On the other hand, metropolitan regions, which are literally dependent on rurban regions, are not passive recipients of rurban contributions. Mechanization, improved transportation, and technical methods in agriculture are metropolitan legacies to more efficient food production, thus forming a solid link in the circle of progressive ur-

banization. At the same time, metropolitan regions perform two immensely important functions. As centres of occupational and social opportunities, they provide outlets for rurban surplus population. Furthermore, by reason of their strategic position with respect to communication, transportation, finance and commerce, metropolitan regions provide a rationalized organization of the domestic economy and serve as intermediaries between rurban regions and foreign markets.

Ecologically speaking, the national society has been undergoing a structural change—in degree, and probably in kind. This change is the familiar process of extensive, increasing urbanization. It is mirrored in the altered position of agriculture and in the vast urbanward migration streams since World War I. However, the explanation for this change is to be found in several ecological contexts. For one thing, foreign demand for agricultural products dissolved in the fear-ridden quest for self-sufficiency on the part of European nations (the world trade community). At the same time, effective demand was reduced by increased tariffs, a decreasing rate of population increase, and changing food habits (metropolitan regions). Finally, rurban regions maintained or increased production for a vanishing market.

The importance of migration, urbanization, and metropolitan dominance lies in the enormously increased interdependence between rurban and metropolitan regions. While metropolitan dominance is one aspect of the rurbanization process, there is a concomitant dependence on rurban regions for food and population, a dependence which grows more critical as the farm population declines. On the other hand, increasing urbanization serves to bind rurban regions more closely to the exchange economy of metropolitan regions, creating thereby an increasing dependence on the development of secondary and tertiary industries in metropolitan regions.

For our purposes, the ultimate ecological framework within which rural phenomena can be studied and made meaningful is the world trade community. Of all the frameworks thus far considered this is perhaps most clearly structured on an economic basis. Yet it would be a flagrant error to neglect the operation of political, military, and cultural factors in its formation and development. Within the world trade community, we can distinguish the *agricultural trade community*, which may be defined as the pattern of nations which are actually or potential consumers of the products of rurban regions within a given national society. As far as the rurban regions of the United States are concerned, the relevant agricultural trade community en-

compasses the nations of the Americas, Scandinavia, Great Britain, Western and North Central Europe, Eastern Europe, and the Far East.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The ecological approach which has been sketched in preceding pages is obviously not a radical re-orientation either in general statement or specific concepts. It is rather an attempt to (1) extract and in part to systematize theoretically valid elements from our ecological heritage and (2) apply this product toward a more coherent understanding of rural phenomena. Yet this reorganized approach seems to possess crucial implications for the future of rural sociology, ecology, and agricultural-rural planning.

Perhaps the primary significance of this orientation for rural sociology is the much needed emphasis on a rural-urban continuum, involving as well the consideration of a progression of roughly concentric ecological spheres in which the distinctions between rural and urban become increasingly blurred. It points to the necessity for studying the farm population in terms of the widening range of social processes which affect its position in American society. More specifically, this approach reveals the futility of the current concentration on "the community" as the basic focus of rural sociological investigation. And finally, it provides an explicit frame of reference for the gathering of further data which can bring order to the relatively chaotic theoretical condition of rural sociology.

As far as ecology itself is concerned, the position presented in this paper removes ecology from its marginal status in social science —which derives from its inclusion of the subsocial, the symbiotic, and unconscious competition in its conceptual scheme. Instead, ecology is viewed as an auxiliary approach in sociology, whose function is to provide a needed spatial dimension in the study of social phenomena. Furthermore, this sociological ecology strongly suggests the necessity of examining social phenomena in terms of all relevant ecological contexts for a proper understanding of their current significance and for a knowledge of the consequences of intervening factors (planning, unforeseen developments).

The idea of adjustment has for a long time been implicit in human ecology. But in general, this conception has been characterized by two failings: the highly subjective, almost mystical nature of the process; the tendency to neglect intercontextual relationships. Our approach brings the concept of ecological adjustment out of the

theoretical interstices of ecology and places it on the agenda for further research. Ecological adjustment is not yet a well-defined concept; provisionally, we might refer to it as the process by which groups and institutions develop and maintain a harmonious set of interrelations within a given ecological structure. What we especially need in this area is a clarification of "harmonious interrelations," or rather, objective criteria of adjustment for specific ecological contexts. And finally, urged by the pressures of social problems and the need for planning, we need to know the criteria for adjustment to broader and increasingly significant ecological structures.

A third area for which this ecological frame of reference has substantial relevance is the field of planning—and specifically, agricultural planning. Now, the idea that agricultural planning requires national and international planning is not yet a truism in American thinking. However, the perspective supplied by our ecological approach will permit no other conclusion. As a result of our analysis of pertinent ecological structures, an ecological definition of agricultural planning is more meaningful and considerably more organized than popular and professional apprehensions of that process. We may define agricultural planning, then, as a series of interrelated programs whose ultimate aim is the rural population in adjusting to changes in the several ecological spheres which affect its welfare.

Once we have demonstrated the co-existence of a number of ecological spheres with reference to the farm population, it seems reasonable to attack specific rural problems within the framework of *appropriate* ecological structures. An unfortunate preconception of many rural sociologists and interested government agencies is to consider the rurban community as the only appropriate ecological context for rural problems. Now, it is certainly true that a given problem can be studied and described on several ecological levels. Yet, from the standpoint of the planner, it is obviously necessary to select for each problem the *strategic* ecological level, the level at which causal factors can be fully comprehended and diverted from problem-inspiring consequences. This approach to rural problems will, however, be reserved for a later article.

ECOLOGICAL UNITS OF RURAL ORGANIZATIONS*

By

DWIGHT SANDERSON

OBJECTIVES: To define the principal types of ecological units (or locality units) which form the basis of rural organization, and to describe their principal characteristics.

A knowledge of rural organization involves a description of the types of geographical areas that determine or condition human association. Human ecology changes with changes of physiographic, technological, economic, political and other conditioning factors. To determine the areas of association that will best promote human welfare is a primary object in rural organization analysis. A knowledge of existing ecological units, of the factors influencing their change, and of the possibilities and limitatons of various types of units for specific purposes, is essential for the purposes of locating rural institutions such as schools, churches, hospitals, and the like; for determining the areas in which the people have common interests as a basis for governmental and organizational locality units; and as a means of adapting rural organization to changing conditions and new human desires.

In scope, the project here outlined will include the description of the principal types of ecological units within some considerable area such as a region or state. A study of the ecological units characteristic of regions needs to be made by some agency which can deal with them upon a national (or even international) basis. Ordinarily, however, the area of any one investigation will probably be that of a state, or a state and one or more neighbouring states with similar conditions. The determination of the fundamental type of locality units is prerequisite to any detailed study of individual types of units and their interrelationships, as outlined in subsequent projects in this report.

Basic qualitative analysis.

It must be recognized that unlike the ecological societies of plants and animals, the units of human ecology are not discrete but overlap, are interrelated, and interdependent. This is because they are

*Research in Rural Organization, Social Science Research Council, Bulletin No. 12, pp. 15-21; Article by Dwight Sanderson.

determined not merely by the physiographical environment, but by cultural factors also, and because to a certain extent man makes and controls his environment. The areas of human association are dependent upon communication and concensus. As man's primary interests become segregated and institutionalised the areas of common interests are no longer identical for all individuals, and only in the political sphere can they be precisely defined and controlled. Differences between the limits of political and the socio-economic areas constitute one of the chief causes of political friction.

For certain purposes it is often necessary to delimit areas for specific purposes, as in the location of a school district. It is possible to delimit areas which are a composite of several forms of association, and the extent to which these areas of association can be made identical will often determine the efficiency of rural organization. As a basis for better integration of existing areas of association, it is essential that these areas first be described exactly as they exist and not in terms of any *a priori* categories. A comparison of the types of locality units found in different regions, and of the historical changes of types of locality units and their relations to each other, will be important in predicting the probable changes which may occur, or which will be desirable in different regions in so far as the conditions become similar.

From this general point of view, we may define the locality units which occur more or less generally and which may be recognized and described, proceeding from the smallest to the largest units, as follows:

1. The *farm* or *homestead* is typically the area inhabited by a single family or household. This is the area of domestic or family association. In the open country the farm (or ranch, etc.) is the typical unit, but in industrial sections an increasing number of homesteads are not farms, according to either census or other definition. In the village or city the homestead may consist of a house and lot or of an apartment. In many cases a farm supports two or more families—of the owner and of laborers or tenants. However, these families are bound together by their economic relation to the farm. A considerable number of laborers and tenants living together on a large farm, plantation or estate, form a group tending to have the characteristics of a neighborhood.

2. The *neighborhood* has been defined as "a geographical group of farm families having some local cohesion" and as "that first

grouping beyond the family which has social significance and which is conscious of some local unity". Various types of neighborhoods depending on the nature of the group bond may be distinguished. Most strong neighborhoods include one or more institutions. Not infrequently neighborhood limits are determined by topography. The neighborhood may consist of or include a hamlet.

3. The *hamlet* consists of an aggregate of several houses near together and usually with one or more institutions. The minimum number of houses which may form a hamlet is a matter of opinion. In Britanny a "hameau" very commonly consists of only three or four to a half dozen houses. In the United States most hamlets probably have from five or six to ten or twelve houses. The maximum size of a hamlet is also purely a matter of arbitrary definition. The Institute of Social and Religious Research classifies places with from 25 to 250 persons as hamlets. Dr. Bruce L. Melvin has defined hamlets as places below 50 in population and we incline to this usage. A hamlet may form a neighborhood by itself, or other nearby homes may be included in a neighborhood of which the hamlet is the center.

4. The *village*. According to the United States Census, a village is any incorporated place of less than 2500 inhabitants. Under this definition hamlets might be incorporated as villages. Incorporated villages are defined by their corporated boundaries and need no definition. Unincorporated villages are aggregates of houses of not less than 50 (or whatever number may be considered as the maximum for a hamlet) inhabitants, not over 2499, as fixed by the census. The difficulty with unincorporated villages is to fix their boundaries so as to enumerate their inhabitants, houses and areas. This should be a subproject in itself. In New York State, we have tentatively included in the boundaries of unincorporated villages all homes which are not over 100 yards apart and within areas in which the density of houses is not less than thirty per mile of street. The Institute of Social and Religious Research has fixed 250 as the minimum number of inhabitants of a village, but this is obviously not in keeping with common usage, for Dr. Melvin has shown that in New York, Iowa, and Georgia, 64 to 87 percent of the unincorporated villages, and 50 percent of all villages, are from 50 to 249 inhabitants.

5. The *rural community.* "A rural community consists of the social interaction of the people and their institutions in a local area in which they live on dispersed farmsteads and in a hamlet or village which forms the center of their common activities." The writer has shown that the delimitation of the rural community depends upon the institutions that are taken as a basis. The general method of determining the rural community area is that first described by Dr. C. J. Galpin. Several studies illustrate the methods employed. They are further described under Project 2.

6. *Rural industrial communities.* It will be necessary to recognize the distinctive nature and role of industrial villages and towns with their restricted tributary areas. Manufacturing, mining, lumbering, or railroad villages often have very little relation to the surrounding farm territory, though their workers and operations may be scattered over recognizable community areas.

7. The *town* is a large village or small city of from 2500 to 5000 or 10,000 inhabitants, the upper limit of population being a matter of opinion. The Census of Distribution makes 9999 the upper limit. The town has more of the characteristics of a city than of an agricultural center. The county seat is a typical town in many sections. The town is usually incorporated and therefore has definite boundaries.

8. The *town-community* consists of a town and its immediate rural community, with those neighborhoods and minor rural communities which depend upon it for certain common economic and social services, such as the services of banks, furniture stores, moving picture theatres, high schools and hospitals.

9. The *city* is any municipality with over 5000 or 10,000 population, depending upon the minimum recognized. From a legal standpoint, a village or town may be chartered as a city under the laws of many states, but for sociological and economic purposes a definite minimum population should be recognized.

10. The *city trade area* includes all open country, neighborhoods and communities whose inhabitants customarily do most of their buying of certain classes of goods, such as men's and women's suits and coats, and luxuries, in the city.

11. The *metropolitan area* includes all the territory within the trade area of a large city, usually of a half million or more inhabitants.

12. The *section* is an area determined by common physiographic and cultural factors, which has certain common interests which differentiate it from contiguous territory. In this country it will commonly consist of several counties or part of counties. The state of Maryland divides clearly into four sections, the Eastern Shore, Southern Maryland, Northern Maryland, and Western Maryland. In New York State may be distinguished the Hudson Valley, the Finger Lake section, the Mohawk Valley and the like. The section is not ordinarily determined by the trade area of any one city. The *pays* of France is a section in this sense.

13. The *region* is the largest area of common cultural interests and is usually more or less determined by physiography and the industries due to physiography. New England, the Cotton Belt, the Corn Belt and the Pacific Coast are well recognized regions. In Europe or where the areas of nations are small, a region may include several states, e.g., the Balkan States, the Baltic States, or the Scandinavian Peninsula. Morse and Brunner give a good illustration of regional characteristics.

14. *Political areas.* For many purposes it will be necessary to relate the above socio-economic areas to the political areas established by law, such as states, counties, townships, incorporated cities and villages, and incorporated districts for special purposes such as schools, fire, water, light, drainage etc.

AGRICULTURE IS FUNDAMENTAL*

By

WILSON GEE

The fact that the farmer feeds the world makes agriculture basic to the existence of the human race. Striking advance has been made in the field of synthetic chemistry, and a number of organic substances have been compounded in the laboratory. While the composition of the food substances which go to make up our daily diet is fairly well understood by the chemist today, even the most hopeful in the progress of that science would scarcely contend it is likely any time soon that the growing of crops and livestock will be supplanted by huge, smoky manufacturing plants producing the necessities of life now furnished by the farms of this and other countries of the world. The difficulties in this connection have been stated by one of our leading biological chemists, as follows:

"If it is true that agriculture utilizes the solar radiation so inefficiently and that labor in agriculture is so little productive, why has not the synthesis of food elements been attempted? To the physiologist and the chemist the reasons are obvious. How completely the simple food elements that the chemist already knows how to produce can be substituted for natural foods has not yet been determined adequately. It is only a few years since it has been known that amino acids may be substituted at least in great part for proteins. Not all the amino acids have as yet been synthesized. Methods for obtaining large quantities of carbonic acid must be devised. The methods of producing simple sugars and fatty acids are laboratory procedures involving many steps and many difficult operations. Probably few of the methods now in use are suitable for large-scale operations. Even if adequate quantities of cheap power were available, it would still be the work of years to translate laboratory practice into large-scale production. It is, however, very doubtful that energy from our common sources of power—coal, oil, water—is at present cheap enough to permit food synthesis to compete with agriculture. Whether the values of agricultural products and of energy from our present sources of power will ever bear such a ratio to one another as to make competition between agriculture and chemical industry feasible, it is, of course, impossible to say. It is more than probable that such com-

*The Social Economics of Agriculture by Wilson Gee, Chapter I, pp. 3-6, copyrighted in 1942, Macmillan Company.

petition will not be possible before the advent of some non-biological method for the utilization of the solar radiation.

In view of the great progress in photochemical theory in the last decade, the problem is far from hopeless. No one could venture to predict when the theoretical and experimental problems will be solved. The solutions may be nearer than most men think. What is most probable is that the practical application will wait on economic necessity. The work in pure science is likely to be completed before this necessity arises. The chemist's task may be done before the engineer is set to work. If the problem is not solved earlier, it will boldly confront us with the exhaustion of the world's coal and oil reserves. The solution of the world's food and fuel problem will be the same. When it is achieved, a more profound social revolution must follow than followed the invention of the steam engine, for the importance of land and agriculture will diminish; and it will remove to a far more distant horizon the bounds that now tend to limit the growth of population."

The achievements of science have been marvellous, and indications are that in the future they will be greater even than those characterizing the past, but in the face of all this, it seems fairly safe to assert with confidence that the chemist will not likely for a long time to come, if ever, be able to create in the laboratory the richly nutritious beefsteak or the luscious ripe peach with their life and health-giving qualities. The living organism, plant or animal, carefully bred by the farmer is the only agency known that can build up the elaborately complex substances in varying proportions of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats with their accompanying ferments, vitamins, and similar essentials characterizing the palatable foods we eat from day to day.

Carver in a discussion of the ways in which mankind gets a living classifies them as *uneconomic* and *economic*.

"The uneconomic methods of getting a living are sometimes destructive, and include all those occupations in which one's success depends upon one's power to destroy, to injure, or to deceive. War, plunder, robbery, and fraud of all kinds are included in this class. These methods are called "uneconomic", because when one individual secures something by any of these methods no one else is benefited and some one is sure to be injured. Other methods are not positively destructive, but are nevertheless unproductive in the sense of returning to society no real advantage for the living received. Getting rich by marrying or inheriting wealth, or through a rise in land values,

would come in this class. The economic or productive methods of getting a living are those in which one's success depends upon one's power to produce or to serve. All productive industries and all useful trades and professions belong in this class. They are called economic because, when one individual gets something by any of these methods, no one else is injured and some one is always certain to be benefited. People who make their living by these methods do not impoverish other people, but tend to enrich them. The richer a man gets by any of the productive methods the richer he makes the rest of the world, and in proportion as the whole community or the whole world adopts these methods, in that proportion will the whole community or the whole world prosper, whereas the opposite is true of the uneconomic methods."

In carrying this interesting classification further, the traditional course is to divide the economic, or productive, methods of making a living into the *primary industries*, the *secondary industries*, and *personal* and *professional services*.

First among the primary industries comes farming, and the others of these are mining, lumbering, hunting, and fishing. Agriculture is frequently designated as a *genetic* industry because the farmer *grows* and *breeds* his crops and livestock. Scientific forestry and fish culture for the same reason are also considered genetic industries. Mining, lumbering, hunting and fishing are known as *extractive* industries because they are concerned in originally deriving from the earth and water various materials and objects already existing in nature. However, under certain conditions agriculture exhibits distinctly *extractive* characteristics. This is the case when farming is done in a manner to exhaust the fertility of the soil, with little or no concern for its permanence as an economic resource. This procedure is sometimes known as *mining* the soil. As a truly genetic industry, agriculture perserves and enhances the fertility and productiveness of the soil, improves breeds of livestock and plant types, and devises new tools and methods of cultivation, thus making possible an advancing and enduring way of life and of making a living. The raw materials used in manufacturing are provided by the primary industries, both *extractive* and *genetic*, and without such a basis there would be no economic striving as we know it.

Agriculture as a primary industry not only feeds the world, but it provides a considerable part of the materials which furnish the grist for the turning wheels of manufacturing plants. Agriculture existed long before our forefathers dreamed of great metropolitan industrial centers, and while conditions were primitive in

those days, such evidences as are available indicate that they were as satisfied with their conditions of life as we are today with this involved system of ours. But never in all history has it been possible, nor will it be, to have a civilization all urban and industrial.

The secondary industries are those concerned with manufacturing, transporting, and merchandising. In these processes, the wealth created or liberated in the primary industries is elaborated into forms of goods better adapted to the needs of civilized mankind. The farmer in raising a wheat crop produces the primary wealth, which the secondary industry of milling changes into flour. In addition, such goods must be transported to warehouses and merchandising establishments where they become available at the place and time required.

The personal or professional service class consists of the useful offices performed by the teacher in banishing ignorance and diffusing knowledge, the healing and disease-prevention functions of the medical profession, the inspirational and elevating services of the clergy, the governing activities of men and women in public life, the entertaining efforts of those in the theatrical arts, and similar beneficial contributions made to the sum total of human welfare and happiness by those in the various other professions.

And so we see that in the broad scheme of our economic life, agriculture occupies a place that is indispensable. Although since the dawn of urban development, the cities have sheltered classes which consciously and unconsciously have sought, more often than not with distinct success, to exploit the rural classes, nevertheless without the fundamental contribution of the agricultural industry all the rest of the fabric of our civilization would topple into ruins almost overnight.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY OR COMMERCIALISM*

By

L. C. GRAY

In recognizing that rural economy falls into two extreme patterns —self-sufficiency and commercialism—with many intermediate and indeterminate stages, one becomes conscious of the poverty of our terminology and the indefiniteness of our concepts. While the nature and the economic and social significance of the extremes have long been more or less understood, it is fairly clear that the intermediate stages are, and long have been, probably more prevalent than the extremes and more significant as economic and social objectives in rural organization. Yet we have not developed any adequate terminology to designate these various intermediate stages or achieved any satisfactory progress in their definition. Still less have we made progress in appraising them in economic and social terms. The economic disadvantages of extreme self-sufficiency are apparent. Mr. Wilson has put us in his debt by emphasizing the offsetting social values and, on the other hand, the economic and social disadvantages of extreme commercialism. But neither he nor probably any of us is so overcome by 'nostalgia for the Golden Age', as he well puts it, that we would advocate a complete return to extreme self-sufficiency. Most of us are likely to prefer to trust in some of the intermediate stages. But what stage? At this point we become incoherent for lack of definiteness in terminology and in conception. How much and what kinds of self-sufficiency are economically efficient and socially healthful? Outside of a few calculations as to percentages of income derived from commercial production and production for use we have done little to define or designate qualitatively these intermediate stages. We have done even less in determining the economic feasibility and social advantages of different types of production for use. I have a definite conviction, which I have voiced on another occasion, that the application of science to the problems of production for use, in the same degree that we have applied science to the problems of production for sale, will point the way to a very much greater degree of individual and community self-sufficiency than most of us have considered possible.

It is a hopeful sign that the two New World economists whose papers open this session have recognized economic and social dis-

*Proceedings of the Fifth Internation at Conference of Agricultural Economists, pp. 113-115.

advantages in extreme commercialism. It marks the passing of the intellectual myopia which, because obsessed by the obvious operating unit efficiencies of the extreme types of commercial production, failed to recognize their glaring inefficiencies when viewed in broad social terms. Now that these scales are falling from our eyes, our profession is about to enter upon distinctly new pathways of progress.

Agricultural economists and sociologists in the New World no less than in Europe are confronted with a number of dilemmas, which may well be given categorical formulation as follows:

1. Commercial specialized agricultural production is more efficient than predominantly self-sufficing agriculture per unit of labour employed and probably per composite unit of labour and capital, and will be unless new types of technical and institutional progress can promote a greater degree of efficiency in production for use.

2. By virtue of the inelastic demand for farm products, it follows that a smaller proportion of the population can find a means of livelihood in agricultural employment in commercial production. Consequently a larger proportion of the population must live in cities, with the social disadvantages widely recognized, unless non-agricultural industry can move to the country-side.

3. In the modern economic world non-agricultural employment appears incapable, under present institutional arrangements, of absorbing the steadily increasing numbers released by progress in agricultural efficiency. According to the estimates quoted by Mr. Wilson, nearly half of the farm operators of the United States produce only 11 per cent of the commercial product. Potentially the major portion of this segment of the farm population could be spared to engage in non-agricultural production if there were an outlet for their services. Inability to absorb them means persistence of low standards of living, a heavy relief burden, the utilization of lands ill-adapted to cultivation with consequent impairment of natural resources.

4. In production for market we encounter the antithetical relationship between abundance and profit which necessitates restrictive policies applied both to production and sale.

5. The profit of the agricultural entrepreneur, as in other types of production for sale, is in conflict at important points with the welfare of the other classes of agricultural workers, and policies which promote the welfare of the entrepreneur in agriculture are often antithetical to the welfare of farm labourers and tenants.

6. As the economic world is now organized, commercial agricultural production appears inconsistent with economic and social stability either for the entrepreneur or his employees.

7. The lack of close correlation between material income and happiness, which has from time immemorial been emphasized by prophet and philosopher, cannot be lost sight of by the rural economist in attempting to appraise the relative merits of the self-sufficing and commercial types of economy.

In conclusion, I am convinced that the social imperative presented by these dilemmas—if I may call them so—will compel agricultural economists to reorient their field of work in the direction of a more searching examination of the economic and social possibilities of self-sufficiency (or production for use), and especially the various intermediate stages between extreme self-sufficiency and extreme commercialism.

TENANCY—SOCIAL ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES*

By

WILSON GEE

1. ADVANTAGES OF FARM TENANCY

Many writers on farm tenancy convey the impression that it is an unmitigated evil. It is not difficult to refute such an attitude since there are a number of advantages to agriculture in the institution of farm tenancy. The most important of these will be briefly considered in succeeding paragraphs.

(1) *Tenancy is a steppingstone to independent owner-operatorship.* The term "agricultural ladder" is used to describe the steps by which the farm worker establishes his relation with the land. The theory of the agricultural ladder postulates that the typical farmer begins his career as a farm laborer, working for wages on his father's or someone else's farm; that after he has saved enough working capital to operate his own farm, he takes the next step on the agricultural ladder, and becomes a farm tenant; and that successfully operating as a tenant he acquires sufficient capital to buy his own farm, then stepping up to the estate of a farm owner. In the process he serves a sort of apprenticeship as it were, gaining desirable experience in handling a farm.

(2) *In some instances to rent a farm is more desirable than to buy it.* In areas where the prices of land are rather prohibitory from a sound purchase point of view, rental rates are often comparatively much more reasonable. Then, too, a farmer can through rental of additional acreage more easily extend his farming business to such an area as will represent the most profitable size of farm for operation in a particular locality. Also, in this same connection it is interesting to note the fact that the average size of the tenant farm in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa is considerably larger than that of the owner farm in the same areas.

(3) *Tenancy enables the prospective farmer safely to determine whether farming is an occupation in which he may happily spend his life, and also to test whether or not a particular farm is the one which he should buy.* A much smaller investment makes these preliminary exploration practicable. If the experiments are successful, the tenant

*The Social Economics of Agriculture by Wilson Gee, Chapter VIII, pp.

may deepen his stake in the venture through acquiring the particular farm.

(4) *Tenancy provides a greater mobility of population, which among a high-grade tenant class as in the West, really functions as a mitigant of provincialism and localism.* Of course, with too large a percentage of a community thus mobile, the result is bad, but for those in process of climbing the rungs of the agricultural ladder the diversity of contacts and variations in farming experience are valuable when the estate of farm ownership is reached.

2. DISADVANTAGES OF FARM TENANCY

The disadvantages of farm tenancy are numerous, and are most apparent in the community where tenancy is most prevalent. These evils of tenancy may be separated into the economic ones, and the resulting social consequences. Among the principal economic ones are to be found:

A. ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGES

(1) *The steady impoverishment of the soil, or what we are accustomed to call soil mining.* It was Arthur Young, one of the earliest of our agricultural economists who said in his *Travels in France* that "the magic of property turns sand to gold. Give a man the secure possession of a bleak rock, and he will turn it into a garden; give him a nine years' lease of a garden and he will convert it into a desert." The aim of the tenant under our existing system of leases in the United States is to rent the best farm available at the lowest rental rate possible, to mine its soil fertility effectually, and then to move to more preferable areas, treating them likewise. One has only to travel through extensive areas in the South where large percentages of tenancy prevail in order to see the results of such a process continued over a number of years.

(2) *Low incomes and resulting low standards of living.* In high percentage tenancy areas, emphasis is placed upon land as a factor of production and tenant farms are substantially smaller than owner farms. It has been proved over and over again that the size of farm is one of the most important elements in successful farm management. This and related factors, by preventing the most profitable combination of the tenant's resources, result in low incomes, and low incomes produce low levels of living. The President's Committee on Farm Tenancy stated the situation as follows:

"Large families of tenants or croppers, or hired farm laborers, are living in houses of two or three rooms. The buildings are fre-

quently of poor construction, out of alinement, weather-beaten and unsightly. The doors and windows are rarely screened. Often the roofs are leaky. The surroundings of such houses are bleak and unattractive. Many have even no outside toilet, or if one is available, it is highly unsanitary.

"Many of these families are chronically undernourished. They are readily subject to diseases. Pellagra, malaria, and the hookworm and other parasites exact heavy toll in life and energy. Suitable provision for maintaining health and treating disease among these families is lacking or inadequate in many localities.

"Clothing is often scarcely sufficient to afford protection to the body, much less to help maintain self-respect."

This is a sharp statement, and of course does not apply to all tenants by any manner of means. Yet, it does characterize the situation of a significant proportion of them, particularly in the South.

(3) *Poor farming methods are likely to result.* It is on the tenant farms in the South that we find the excessive development of the one-crop system of cotton and tobacco, with all of its numerous accompanying ills. Due to ignorance, low educational levels, the hampering demands of the landlord, and a general prejudice against progress, it is this tenant class of the farm population which the farm demonstration agent has greatest difficulty in influencing. As a consequence backwardness in methods in a scientific age for agriculture exists, and accompanying the condition ill-balanced systems of farming prevail over wide areas.

(4) *A concentration of landownership tends to result in such areas, often developing into "absentee ownership".* Such a situation develops a permanent tenant class, among which due to low incomes and low living standards, ideals of ownership status are stifled.

As serious and blighting as are the economic results of large percentages of farm tenancy, the social consequences are still more significant in the lowering of community life in general.

B. SOCIAL DISADVANTAGES

(1) *A permanent tenant class tends to develop with its accompanying social stratification.* To an appalling extent, the children of tenant farmers tend themselves to become tenants. Two significant generalizations may be made in this connection: "First, decade by decade, it is becoming increasingly difficult for farmers to climb the so-called agricultural ladder onto the ownership rung. Second, there is developing a permanent tenant class, from which relatively

few emerge into ownership. In the South this class, formerly composed largely of negroes, has been augmented rapidly by recruits from white farmers."

While educational levels are improving among the population generally, rural schools still lag as compared with city educational facilities. Moreover, the elements of the population who have the greatest relative need for education are often the very ones who seem most reluctant to avail themselves of the facilities at their command. The result is that, on the average, owners of farms and their children are much better educated than tenant farmers and their children. This lack of adequate educational training and the narrow outlook on life resulting therefrom constitute serious retarding factors in the ease with which the increasingly difficult agricultural ladder is climbed. Unusual drive is required to step up the scale from tenant to owner, particularly in a period of distressed agricultural conditions, and character, education, and vision are important personality traits in effecting the transition.

(2) *Too great a mobility of the farm population.* Most of the ills assigned to tenancy in one way or another grow out of this shifting or instability of the tenant farmer. Pertinent figures, collected several years ago but representing much the situation existing at the present time, show that for the United States as a whole 27 per cent of the tenants changed farms annually, or somewhat more than one out of each four. For the South, the corresponding figure was 32 per cent on the average, or approximately one out of each three tenant farms. In the West, the tenant population was more stable, only 17 per cent of the tenants shifting, while in the North, the similar situation was 18 per cent.

This greater instability of the tenant farmer as compared with the owner is attributable to the fact that a considerable proportion of the tenants each year step up to the class of owners. Then, too, in the tenant class is a large proportion of the incompetent, thriftless, restless, and migratory element, lacking in the stability of character to achieve ownership or to stay put anywhere for long at a time. The shifting of the tenant from farm to farm is made easier by the fact that he has small amounts of property to move and no stake in the land.

(3) *Institutional instability* is the result of the frequent shifts of a considerable proportion of the population. In areas of high tenancy percentages, school populations are uncertain and changeable, and compulsory education laws difficult of enforcement. The tenant classes, because of illiteracy and social distinctions, feel ill at ease

in church and Sunday school, and hence attend irregularly or not at all, contributing but slightly to the finances of the organization. Every basic institution in the social life of a community feels the blighting effects of this migratory, unstable element of the population.

(4) Such a situation leads to *a lack of community consciousness and community spirit*, resulting in a backwardness or disintegration of community life for owners as well as tenants. Small amounts of tenancy, largely looking towards ownership as a goal, and consisting in considerable degree of sons and sons-in-law of owners in the community, produce no such social stratification as results in most communities of the South where a permanent tenant class exists. Community organizations are stifled, basic institutions languish, wealth levels are lowered, living standards are inadequate, and human individuals lose the respect of themselves and others in these high tenancy communities.

FAMILISM AS THE FUNDAMENTAL TRAIT OF THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES*

By

P. A. SOROKIN

Since the family has been the basic social institution of the rural social world it is natural to expect that the whole social organization of agricultural aggregates has been stamped by the characteristics of the rural family. In other words, all the other social institutions and fundamental social relationships have been permeated by, and modeled according to, the patterns of rural family relationships. *Familism* is the term used to designate this type of social organisation in which all the social relationships and institutions are permeated by and stamped with the characteristics of the family. Familism is the outstanding and fundamental trait in the *Gestalt* of such a society. The following discussion will clarify the meaning of the term.

1. The first indication of familism in the agricultural population is the fact that it is more inclined to marry, and to marry at an earlier age, than the urban population. In other words, the rural population is less inclined to remain single and to be free from the family organization than is the urban population. This proposition is well supported by the statistics of the rural-urban marriage and civil status. Here are a few representative data.

With the age distribution in 1920 the same in both urban and rural districts of the United States there would have been 57.0 per cent married in the city and 63.5 per cent in the rural districts. According to a somewhat different computation of William F. Ogburn, there are 11.5 per cent more marriages in the country than in the city. The data for other countries, with few easily explainable exceptions, show somewhat similar trends.

Urbanism is nearly always associated with a decrease in the proportion of married females, but not always with a decrease in the proportion of married males. Further, widowed males decrease with urbanization and widowed females increase. The greater number of divorced are to be found in the cities. On the whole, marriage

*A Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology, Edited by P. A. Sorokin, C. C. Zimmerman, and C. J. Galpin, Vol. II, pp. 41-50, copyrighted in 1932, University of Minnesota.

increases as a form of social organization in rural districts, and its ties are more binding than in urban centers. Statistics show also that the rural females in practically all countries marry at an earlier age than the urban females. Rural males in most countries also marry earlier, though in a few countries they marry a little later than or at the same age as the urban males.

The main difference is revealed by a comparison of the predominantly agricultural countries with the predominantly urbanized countries. By such a comparison we find that in the first group of countries there are a greater number of early marriages than in the second.....the number of marriages at early ages is conspicuously higher in the predominantly agricultural than in the predominantly industrialized countries....These data relate to recent times. In the past in agricultural societies the marital status was almost universal; only the few defectives and unfortunates and those who had to sacrifice their happiness for the interests of the family remained unmarried. To be single was regarded as a great misfortune. Such a situation clearly shows familism to be the basic organization of the rural population. In urban societies, on the other hand, an unmarried individual comes to be regarded as a normal phenomenon and hence familism tends to weaken and to disappear as an element in the organisation of urban people.

2. Wherever the rural family has been a strongly integrated cumulative group that has engulfed its individual members and fused their personalities with itself, it is natural to assume that the family rather than the individual has been taken as the unit for taxation, the performance of other duties, social and political representation, the evaluation of the social status of the individual, the exercise of rights and obligations, and so forth. This assumption is corroborated by the facts. Indeed, in such societies the family rather than the individual has been responsible for the proper fulfilment of duties to the state, the church, and other superfamily groups, and these groups have themselves addressed and dealt with the family and not with the individual. Hence there has developed the idea and practice of the *collective responsibility of the family* for the payment of taxes and for heroic deeds and crimes performed by members. Whatever the fault, heroism, or achievement of a family member, the blame or the praise has been given both juridically and morally to the family first of all. It is consistent with this type of organization *that property has been held by the family rather than by the individual.* Both land and other forms of property have belonged first of all to the family. Since the family has been responsible for economic duties connected with non-

family agencies, it is natural that the family was also the possessor of property rights. This shows that these and other elements of the whole *Gestalt* of the rural society have been mutually well fitted. Since the family has been held responsible for the offenses or achievements of its members, it is natural also that *the family rather than other—moral, intellectual, religious, and social—agencies has taken care of the education, training, and molding of the behavior of its members.* Since the family has been responsible for them, it was necessary that the family be given the autonomy necessary to shape them. The obligation was necessarily connected with a corresponding right. These facts make it comprehensible that extrafamilistic agencies have interfered little in the regulation of the inner relationships of the members of the family; that the family has had the autonomy to control these relationships; and that the head of the family has had the rights and the authority to be the ruler, the priest, the teacher, the educator, and the manager for and of his family.

3. Another conspicuous trait of familism is that *the social status of a man in such societies has been determined first of all by the status of the family into which he was born.* The son of a Brahman became a Brahman; the son of a Sudra became a Sudra; the son of a slave became a slave; and the son of a noble became a noble. Since the family has been the social unit of such societies, the inheritance of the social position of the family by its members and the evaluation of an individual's status according to the status of his family have been logical and necessary. Hence it is not surprising that this trait is found in practically all predominantly rural societies, from agricultural India and China to agricultural Rome and Greece and the agricultural Europe of the Middle Ages. As a matter of fact, it has been shown elsewhere that the determination of the status of an individual according to that of his family has been most ingenious and appropriate under conditions where there have been strong family ties, purity of blood, and efficient family training.

4. Among other aspects of familism is the fact that *the morals, the laws, and the mores of such a society have strongly guarded the stability of the family through their provisions for the inviolability of the marriage vow and the stability of the bonds between parents and children.* Since the family status has determined the status of the individual, these family ties have had to be supported by all possible means: by religious and moral proscriptions and by the courts with punishment for their violation. Viewed from this standpoint it is easily comprehensible why the laws of such societies have not favored divorces to any considerable extent. Sexual life outside legal marriage and especially if in violation of the marriage vows (adultery) has been

punished most severely by the Bible, the Laws of Manu, the Code of Hammurabi, and the ancient codes of the Teutons, Slavs, Celts, and other peoples. These various codes have usually punished adultery by a qualified capital punishment such as stoning, burning, drowning, or the cutting off of the sexual organs. Such phenomena as a child's disobedience of its parents have also been punished severely. We could prolong our discussion of such phenomena, but it is sufficient to say that the key of familism deciphers for us almost all the important characteristics of the laws, mores, religion, and other institutions of familistic societies.

5. The entire political structure of such a society has also been permeated by familism, so much so that it has become a platitude to say that the relationship between ruler and subjects has been paternalistic or patriarchal. These terms clearly convey the idea that super-and extrafamilistic relationships of political or other domination-subordination types have been shaped according to the pattern of the family. King, monarch, ruler, lord, have been viewed as an enlarged type of family patriarch. Not only the relationships between political ruler and subjects, but also those between a lord and his servants, slaves and serfs, between the head of a guild and its apprentices, between the employer and the employed, between the boss and the bossed, have been paternalistic and patriarchal. In brief, all important relationships of domination and subordination have been of this type. The predominant type of political organization in the rural community is represented by the institution of the village elder, the head, elected by the peasants just as the family elder is either openly or tacitly elected by the family members. The whole character of the village chief's authority and administration is a mere replica of the paterfamilias' authority and administration.

6. In a rural family the solidarity of its members is *organic* and *spontaneous* rather than *contractual.* It springs up of itself, naturally, as a result of close co-living, co-working, co-acting, co-feeling, and co-believing. Any contractual relationship between its members would be out of place and contradictory to the whole tone of the family. There is no more place for a contract with its "from this to this, no less and no more" distribution of the rights and duties of the parties than there is for a contract defining the relationship between various organs of the same body. They are inseparable parts of one body, and each has to do its best for its own benefit. It is not surprising, then, that the purely contractual relationships have been but little developed in the familistic society. Their place has been occupied by the spontaneous and organic solidarity of the family, the non-

contractual character of which has stamped itself upon other non-familial relationships. It has developed non-contractual mutual aid, cooperation, solidarity and similarity in mores, religion, beliefs, and so on.

7. The economic organization of familistic societies is also stamped with the traits of the rural family. The predominant form of ownership in such a society is that of the family rather than of the individual. Production and consumption are primarily family production and family consumption. The market is less developed. Exchange has more of the characteristics of barter than of a monetary transaction. In the economic relationship of the families with one another, or of the family with the superfamily groups, the subject of economic rights and duties has been the family. The whole code of laws regulating the economic relationships of the members of such a society is permeated by familism.

8. If we took any other aspect of rural society, whether mores, beliefs, or arts, any one would show familistic traits quite clearly. Religion, education, and the arts are marked to a greater or less degree by *the cult of the family and its ancestors* (*the lares and penates of the* Romans and similar deities of the Greeks, the Hindus, the Chinese, and the Europeans of the Middle Ages). There are sacrifices, rites, oblations, and magical acts intended to maintain the well-being of the family and to obtain the aid of the deceased ancestors. The head of the family usually officiates at all religious services, for which there is a family corner or building. The very ideas and representations of the deities and their relationship to one another in such familistic societies have been familistic, for the deities are represented as being related to one another as father, mother, brothers, sisters, and other relatives.

9. Can we wonder that in such a society we invariably find a low mobility of the members of the family, the existence of strong family traditions, intense family pride or shame, and a great desire to keep the family name pure, unspotted and undesecrated, a readiness to make the utmost sacrifice for its interests, and an art belonging typically to the family? Every important social institution and aspect of the culture of rural society shows familistic traits. We have given some of the important illustrations of this, which must be sufficient for the present. In subsequent parts of this work these traits will be developed in detail. The readnigs which include Confucius's "Classic of Filial Piety" and selections from Frederic le Play and others depict many traits of the familistic society.

INDIVIDUALISTIC ATOMISM AND EXTRAFAMILIAL ASSOCIATIONISM AS DOMINANT TRAITS OF THE GESTALT OF URBAN SOCIETIES:

Since the family in the typical urban society is much weaker, less stable, and less integrated, since many of its functions are lost and the family itself tends to become more and more atrophied, it is natural that urban society cannot be marked by familism to the same degree as the rural, but that its *Gestalt* must be characterized by other dominant traits. The dominant trait of an urbanized and industrialized society may be styled *atomistic individualism, paralleled by extrafamilial interest groups.* The individual rather than the family tends to become the fundamental social unit in such a society and the subject of rights and duties. Since the collective responsibility of the family for all its members tends to disappear, the importance of the tie of kinship decreases. The social status of the individual is determined less and less on the basis of the status of his family and more and more on the basis of his personal characteristics. Private property tends to grow at the expense of family property. The autonomy of the family in the management of its affairs decreases; and extrafamilial agencies, such as the state, the church, the public school, social welfare agencies, and so forth, not only take from the family its religious, educational, disciplinary, and other functions but also interfere more and more in its affairs. They are imposing a greater and greater number of conditions that must be followed by the family, with the result that the authority of the paterfamilias is decreasing. In brief, the family is being more and more disassociated and its individual members are being more and more freed from its bonds.

This tendency shows itself in all the important aspects of the *Gestalt* of urban society. Its economics becomes less and less familistic and more and more individualistic and cosmopolitan, whether in the field of production, exchange, or consumption. Its institution of property follows the same trend: family property decreases, while individual property and the property of extrafamilial groups, such as corporate firms, public bodies, national and international corporations, trusts, syndicates, and associations increase. The familistic and paternalistic traits of its political organization are replaced by contractual relationships. Artificial solidarity occupies the place of organic solidarity; spontaneous mutual aid tends to be replaced by contractual co-operation. In the field of religion the family head ceases to officiate as a priest; the cult of ancestors disappears; and the beliefs in familial deities are obliterated. Other family mores fall

into oblivion: the cult of the family, the family honor, the family traditions, and so forth. The laws of urban society tend to give the family less and less protection; divorce is permitted; violation of the marriage oath goes unpunished; sexual life outside legal marriage is tolerated; the boundary line between the nonlegal and the socially sanctioned sexual union tends to become less clearly defined. Arts, recreation, education, and other cultural aspects all tend to lose their familistic traits. In brief, not the family but the individual tends to become the incarnation of social rights and duties. Individualism replaces familism.

But pure individualism is a fiction. Man cannot exist as an isolated atom, for he needs association with other men for satisfaction of his needs, for the annulment of suicidal lonesomeness, and for his biological, social, and moral wellbeing. In a familistic society the family is the institution that serves all these purposes. In an urbanized society, with its atrophied family, other associations must perform these functions, at least to some extent. Such associations indeed appear, exist, and multiply. These are the various functional or interest groupings as trade-unions, occupational associations, political parties, clubs, religious, economic, literary, and welfare organizations, and other extrafamilial associations and groups. When freed from family ties, man seems to find himself in a kind of social emptiness, facing lonesomeness and unbearable isolation. In order to escape, he rushes to create and to enter these extrafamilial associations. Such extrafamilial associationism and an increase of its organs, agencies, and institutions is the inevitable counterpart of the atomistic individualism of urban society. Both aspects stand out in marked contrast to familism, which is the dominant characteristic of rural society.

For the present these indications are sufficient to clarify the assertion that familism is a fundamental trait of the organization of rural society. They prove that unless one understands familism one cannot grasp the soul and the essence of the *Gestalt* of rural society.

AGRARIAN MOVEMENTS*

By

ALVIN JOHNSON

1. *INTRODUCTION*

Throughout the history of civilization town and country nave presented contrasts, not easily definable, in ways of living, in manners and morals, in conceptions of fundamental values. In static social periods these contrasts manifest themselves in social and economic friction having no significant political consequences. Until very recent times the manners and speech and dress of the countryman made of him a butt of ridicule for the townsman. Until recently, also, the prevailing rural view of the townsmen was that they were idle wasters, sharpers, parasites upon the husbandman's honest toil. In the exchange of products or services between town and country there were much bickering and incessant complaints of trickery. The townsman was most frequently accused of charging exorbitant prices, the countryman, of putting his best apples at the top of the barrel or selling in the town products of dubious history, like contaminated cream or diseased meat. A solidarity of opinion condoned the vices of the one side and exaggerated the vices of the other, emphasized the virtues of the one and reflected doubt upon the virtues of the other. Town and country represented antagonistic cultures, each so tenacious of its own ways that language and manners often drifted far apart, as in the remotely analogous case of nation building.

In the last three quarters of a century compulsory education, by imposing universal standards of speech, has worked powerfully toward the obscuring of the cultural divergencies of town and country. Universal military service has exerted a similar influence in continental Europe. Above all, the modern economic process, with its easy transportation penetrating even the remotest rural districts, its standardization of consumption, of manners, speech, ideas might seem destined to obliterate altogether the lines between town and country. In fact, however, the lines of cleavage cut deeper than the superficial cultural manifestations. So long as the countryman faces nature directly, engaged directly in the work of production, while the townsman meets nature through the intermediation of "business", the dis-

*Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, Introduction by Alvin Johnson, Vol. I, pp. 489-492, copyrighted in 1948, Macmillan Company.

tinction between country and city may be expected to persist. When agriculture becomes essentially capitalistic, as in some parts of the United States and other countries of extensive land resources, or in the plantation zones of the tropics, the contrast of country and town disappears and the class struggle assumes a form analogous to the class struggle in industry.

Within the country society as within the towns, conflict of classes may emerge: small proprietors against large, tenants against landlords, hired laborers against owners of estates. These conflicts contrast sharply with the general conflict between town and country interests which characterizes a true agrarian movement. In some instances, it is true, what appears to be merely a struggle between different rural elements is essentially an agrarian-urban conflict. Thus an anti-landlord movement wears a true agrarian character when the landlords as a class are absentees or, if not absentees, nevertheless assimilated to urban life. The owners of the latifundia, to whom tradition ascribes the ruin of ancient Rome, lived in the cities, leaving their estates to the management of *villici*. In the ancient regime of France the large landowners were urbanized in culture; many of them lived continuously in Paris or in provincial cities. The Irish landlord of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries spent most of his time in commercial and industrial England.

Genuine rural class struggles have no strict relevance in a study of agrarian movements. In any historical discussion, however, it is inexpedient to draw lines too sharply. Interclass rural conflicts, agrarian problems as viewed by the statesman, and self-conscious agrarian movements, while easily distinguishable in theory, form in history a closely woven texture which is difficult and profitless to unravel. In the sections that follow the subject is treated broadly, in order to cover the related group of rural problems popularly described as agrarian.

True agrarian movements have arisen whenever urban interests have encroached, in fact or in seeming, upon vital rural interests. Such encroachment may take the form of the absorption of the better agricultural lands by urban wealth, through violence as in Ireland, legal chicanery as in nineteenth century Mexico, the superior bargaining power of groups trained in trade, or by a combination of all three, as in England of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Often such encroachment is of long standing, apparently accepted throughout generations. In such cases the emergence of an agrarian movement appears like a revolutionary infection, instead of the natural expression of agrarian ideals and sentiments. An instance is the

widespread movement against the large landholders of eastern Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although the immediate cause of these movements was the distress which resulted from land reforms, it is improbable that the peasant had ever, in fact, accepted willingly his tributary position.

Another point at which the vital interests of the country have come into conflict with town or city centres is money lending. Especially in pre-capitalistic societies the loan contract has run in terms disadvantageous to the cultivator of the soil. He has been prone to borrow at usurious rates, being untrained to calculate properly the actual burden of the interest or his ability to repay. Whole communities have thus come to be saddled with debt, and have developed a common hatred of the money lender and the town society which he represents. This hatred becomes all the more violent when racial, national or sectional differences add weight to the social-cultural differences of country and town. Agrarian rage against usury provided a sinister background upon which religious and political fanaticism inscribed the vengeance of Kurdish shepherd and Turkish peasant against the Armenians. Antagonism to the alien British money lender was abundantly in evidence in the inchoate agrarianism of the American South in the early decades of independence. "Eastern Capital" was a bugaboo of mid-western agrarianism of the greenback and Farmers Alliance period.

A third point at which the conflict of urban and rural interests gives rise to agrarian movements is the distribution of the burden of taxation. Before the American Civil War the agricultural South was violently opposed to the tariff, holding it to be a means of taxing the South for the benefit of northern industry. The principal issue in modern agrarian movements, however, is that of prices. With the progress of the commercial and industrial system the country districts fall away from their primitive self-sufficiency and come to depend more and more upon a general market for the disposal of their products and the procuring of necessities of consumption and production. This occurs first of all in such staples as tobacco and cotton, where direct consumption is negligible. With improvements in production the range of commercialized agricultural production extends, until virtually the whole product of extensive farming districts finds its way to the market. The matter of prices becomes vital to the life of the rural community.

In the circumstances agrarian sentiment fastens itself now upon one feature of the commercial system, now upon another. The most general features of attack are the "middleman", who makes his pro-

fit, according to prevailing rural opinion, by depressing the price to the farmer and raising it to the urban consumer; the speculator, who emphasizes the spread of prices; the transportation agency, which takes, it is assumed, an exorbitant share of the product in return for carrying it to market. Similarly the middleman is charged with an unconscionable inflation of the prices the farmer has to pay for his supplies.

Out of this antagonism to the agencies of trade and transportation has arisen an agrarianism throughout western civilization which seeks to arm itself with either political or economic weapons, or both. On the political side there is a ceaseless agitation, sometimes more or less successful, for the restriction of speculation, the control of railway rates, elevator charges, and the like. On the economic side there is a movement toward cooperative organization in the sale of products and the purchase of supplies. American agrarianism has been mainly political. The European agrarian movement has won its chief victories through cooperation, although it has also availed itself of political means, as in Denmark, where agriculture is not only thoroughly organized cooperatively, but also has bent the resources of the state to its ends in the control of railway rates, in taxation and in the provision of cheap credit for the establishment of farm ownership.

On occasion agrarianism has struck out against more abstract forces, like the appreciation in the value of money and the consequent fall of prices that attended the resumption of specie payments after the Civil War; the worldwide rise in the value of gold in the quarter of a century from 1870 to 1895; the credit deflation after the World War. While the greenback, free-silver and antideflation movements were not exclusively agrarian, they drew their chief strength from agrarianism.

Since the time of Colbert agrarianism has frequently fixed its chief interest upon tariff policies. During the eighteenth century the agricultural interests succeeded in fixing on the statute books of England a succession of laws designed to check the importation and facilitate the profitable exportation of corn. Especially since the middle of the nineteenth century, when the competition of the virgin lands of the American West began to make itself felt severely, European agrarianism has been decidedly protectionist. Agricultural duties have been a primary demand of the agrarians in all western Europe. In the United States the general agrarian approval of protection as a means of creating a domestic market was supplemented, in the period following the Great War, by a demand for

direct protection, to be made effective through what amounted to an export bounty.

Varying as is the content of agrarian demands in differing circumstances, certain characteristics appear to be fairly general. However definite its material objectives, agrarian agitation promptly assumes a moral color. A semimystical sense of the paramount importance to humanity of agricultural production is everywhere manifest. Hence an agrarian movement under way is almost always characterized by violence of thought, and often violence of action. In spite of this interpolation of moral attitudes—or perhaps because of it—most agrarian movements are short lived. The emotions burn themselves out, leaving an aftermath of negativism and discouragement. Even at the present time, with agriculture extensively commercialized, there is the sharpest contrast between the ebb and flow of agrarian sentiment and the remorseless pursuit of political interests characterizing industrialism.

Most agrarian movements in history have been confined to areas limited relatively to the political system within which they have operated. This fact has most frequently foredoomed them to failure. When they have attained to partial success, the explanation commonly lies in the fact that non-agricultural forces have been enlisted to give dramatic coherence and cogency to agrarian demands, as in the case of the French physiocrats or the lawyers of the old South. Or else agrarian demands have been taken over by statesmen as essentially in the general interest. Thus agricultural protection in countries like France and Germany won the effective support of statesmen in the interest of national self-sufficiency in peace and war.

Agrarian movements are often bracketed with the labor movement in its various forms—trade unionism, social democracy—as parallel manifestations of the democratic movement of the times. On the whole, however, the contrasts between the two movements appear more marked than the analogies. The typical laborer owns little besides his hands; the typical member of an agrarian movement owns land and home, or at least holds a quasi-permanent tenure. The economic status of participants in the labor movement is roughly the same: in agrarian movements the rich farmer and the poor stand shoulder to shoulder. The conception of self-sufficiency has never been lost by the farmer; it has never been cherished by the laborer. The objective of the labor movement is simple and intelligible—to secure higher wages for shortened hours of toil. The agrarian objectives are abstract, undefinable, elusive. When the

laborer has won in a struggle with the employer he carries away his winnings in his pocket. When the farmer has secured a law against usury or speculation, the probabilities are that usury and speculation change their masks and come back into the market place. The labor movement admits of close and tenacious organization, capable of persisting through generations. An agrarian movement is held together by a moral fervor that cools.

Attempts have been made in various times to unite the agrarian and the labor movement for both economic and political ends, but the most extensive experiment in this direction, the composite peasants' and workers' government of Soviet Russia, has involved endless friction. In America the Knights of Labor, the Farmers Alliance, the Farmer-Labor party, have attempted to effect consolidation of agrarian and labor interests for the advancement of political policies. The permanent results of such combinations have not been notable.

In the following sections of this article the agrarian movements of the several periods of history and the several modern states have been traced upon the institutional background. No attempt has been made to attain to comprehensiveness, since a comprehensive history of agrarian movements in all their forms would represent a major section of the history of human culture. Neither has any attempt been made to establish a schematic unity, since unity would necessarily be misleading in the handling of such varying material. The more significant facts have, however, been assembled, to make possible a conspectus of the agrarian factor in its relation to social-political institutional development.

RELIGION IN PRIMITIVE CULTURES*

By

RALPH TURNER

The origin of religion is one of the most controversial questions among students of religion and history.

Almost all contemporary religions embody the doctrine of revelation, which explains their origin as an imparting to man by some spirit of a knowledge of the spirit world. The idea "revelation," it may be held, is a corollary of the concept "daimonic universe". Since the discovery that man existed on earth many thousands of years, the times and places of revelation have grown uncertain. Some recent writers have postulated an original revelation by *"One True God"* at that point in biological evolution when man emerged from his animal ancestors; it is sometimes argued that at this point the *"soul"* was planted in man. Confronted with the belief in a daimonic universe everywhere prevalent among primitive peoples, these writers explain that the originally revealed pure monotheism underwent a deterioration and became a mythology.

Opposed to this conception of the origin of religion is the idea that it developed as a natural growth of human understanding and as a natural expression of human feeling. The proponents of this idea assert that man invented the concept *"spirit"* or *"daimon"* just as he invented technology and arts.

Although there are many definitions of religion it seems safe to assert that there is no religion without gods; in other words, religion had its source in the thought and feeling of men as they lived in the daimonic universe. Its central idea is that the affairs of men are under the control of "powers greater than man"; its dominant emotion, which takes many moods, is the feeling that man is dependent on these powers. Accordingly, throughout social and cultural developments, this idea and this feeling have been from time to time restated in terms of new conceptions of the "powers greater than man." But always man has remained in a world of which he possesses a limited understanding. Thus the "powers greater than man" have changed, but man's dependence upon them has remained. In this manner religion has developed without having lost the primitive idea and feeling that went into it.

*The Great Cultural Traditions by Ralph Turner, Vol. I, pp. 104-110, copy righted in 1941, McGraw Hill Book Company.

The chief religious acts have meaning in terms of this idea and this feeling. In man's effort to maintain relations with the powers greater than he, he worships; and worship consists of three types of acts: (1) prayer, (2) sacrifice, and (3) ritual. Prayer is an effort to communicate with the "higher powers". Among primitive peoples prayer is usually a request or an expression of thankfulness; in any case it expresses the feeling of man's dependence on the higher powers. Sacrifice is an act in which some object is devoted to the higher powers, perhaps as a gift or as means of communion. Sacrifice involves the belief or feeling that, since man is weak and the higher powers are strong, they are impressed with his dedication to them of something he regards as valuable. Ritual is a series of acts performed according to rules in the belief that they please the higher powers. Usually they consist of fixed orders of prayers, sacrifices, and ceremonial supplications and are carried out as group rather than as individual activities. At the center of ritualistic practices is the concept "sacred": the persons who perform them, the ground where they are performed, the objects and vestments with which they are performed, and the language and gestures of the performance are regarded as holy, *i. e.* set apart from common things. Through rituals the sense of social unity and religious feeling are blended; in the ritual objects, dress, gestures, and sounds, aesthetic qualities are compounded with social and religious feelings, in an overpowering experience. Among primitive peoples rituals—which are performed generally only at times of crisis in the life of the individual or of the group—stir the individuals and groups to deep emotions.

The varieties of prayers, sacrifices, and rituals of primitive worship are far too numerous to describe.

Religion, it is important to realize, is always the profound judgment which men, sensing all experience, make upon life, and they assimilate into this judgment the pervasive emotion which existing conditions of life nurture. Through this assimilation the greatest and the lowest of men in understanding and feeling sense their oneness—and that oneness, however known or felt, is their *God.*

Religion is the emotional expression of the human need for security in a universe never fully understood.

THE TENDENCIES OF RELIGIOUS GROWTH IN PRIMITIVE CULTURES

In the course of the development of hunting, nomadic, and peasant-village cultures man entered into new relations with the environment and shaped new social structures; the emotional reactions

to these relations and structures necessarily affected his feeling of dependence on the "higher powers" and, therefore his worship. Thus although the fundamental elements of religion were everywhere the same, the organization of those elements in *religions* was conditioned by the various types of cultures.

1. *The Religion of Hunters.* Hunting peoples look upon animals as the givers of life and the masters of men, and their spirits are the objects of belief and worship. The artifacts of the old stone age seem to testify the early emergence of a religion of this sort. Its central figure was the animal guardian spirit, which is believed to protect and nourish men. Since there are many kinds of animals, different individuals, as well as groups, have different guardian spirits. Some contemporary hunting peoples seek the identity of an individual's guardian spirit in a dream or vision induced by deprivation or ritualistic suggestion. The social aspects of this belief in animal guardian spirits produced *totemism.* The primary concept of totemism is that the members of a clan, a kinship group, are descended from a common animal ancestor. The doctrine of the "totemic ancestor" can be understood as the projection of the conception of kinship into a spirit world whose chief figures were the spirits of animals. Worship consists of propitiating the totemic ancestor in the interest of social well-being. Such worship often takes the form of offering food to the totemic ancestor or of performing rituals of purification and sacrifice before going on the hunt. Worship does not mean that the hunter does not destroy the living representatives of his totem; on the contrary, he seeks their multiplication and craves from his totem luck in taking them. Success in the hunt is regarded as a sign of the beneficence of the guardian spirit.

Besides the belief in animal guardian spirits, hunting peoples generally recognize ancestral spirits and a few beings representing the prominent or powerful aspects of nature. Except in a more general way these spirits of nature do not enter into the rule of human affairs. Often two contrasting features of the environment are conceived as spirits—one good, the other evil—and life is believed to embody their struggle; quite as often one great spirit, such as Biliku of the Andaman Islanders or Dengdit of the African Dinka, is believed to have been the creator of the earth. Ancestral spirits, however, hold a strong position in the beliefs of hunting peoples; they are especially significant in preserving the unity of the group. In fact, group life is often conceived as moving under the direction of long dead ancestors whose powers are far greater than the spirits of those who have died recently. Propitiation of ancestors frequently takes the form of offering food and caring for graves.

Although the hunter often seeks for himself the favour of the spirits, the worship of hunting peoples is generally organized socially in great ceremonials, such as dances and initiatory rites. Through such ritualistic performances the group as a unit supplicates the favour of the spirits; its sense of unity provides the emotional drive that gives fervor to worship. There is little place for individuality in the religious thought and practices of hunting peoples.

2. *The Religion of Nomads.* With the development of socio-cultural types, such as nomads and peasants, whose normal activities involved relations with nature different from those of hunting life, it was inevitable that the role of the spirits should be reinterpreted in terms of new experiences. Nomads and peasants did not give up the general ideas evolved by their hunting ancestors; nor did they abandon the belief in many of the particularized spirits which these forerunners had conceived. Above all they preserved the beliefs in ancestral spirits and in daimons of disease. On the whole, however, the lesser spirits passed into the background of nomad and peasant thought; the foreground was occupied with abstractions which embodied deeper understanding of the world and man.

The religion of nomads turned about a spiritual being that mirrored life on the grasslands; thus in all parts of the world pastoral peoples have conceived of a *sky-god*, sometimes identified with the storm but more generally associated with the sun. Those social developments which gave them the patriarchate gave to this sky-god the attributes of leadership and fatherhood; his jealousy, wrath, and arbitrary violence reflected the nomadic temper. Often he rode the plains in the storm, hurling thunderbolts; like the sun, sometimes he held high judgment in the heavens. Sacrifices of the animals which flourished on the grasslands propitiated him.

The idle hours of the herdsman gave ample time for meditations on the relations of gods and men, and so nomads developed a unified body of religious beliefs and literature; drawing images from the expansive grasslands and embodying the simple but strong sentiments which bound together the nomadic group, the beliefs and literature arrived at a universality in sharp contrast with the less well integrated systems of hunters and peasants. The intense emotion inspired by crisis dangerous to the herd entered deeply into the religious feelings of nomads and made their faith in a chosen god undeviating. The unstable life of the group allowed such development of religious ideas and emotions in individuals that significant expressions came from persons who spoke their own experience; such individuals were recognized as prophets.

3. *The Religion of Peasants.* Peasants, who naturally concentrated attention and feeling upon the earth and the growing process, generally united them in a belief in an *earth mother.* Just as the religion of the nomad expressed the role of the dominant male, so the religion of the peasant expressed the role of the creative female. This goddess was almost universally identified with the earth, fecundity, sexual passion, the domestic arts, and the plants. Her worship recognized the seasonal aspects of plant growth; undoubtedly its most significant idea, turning about the death of vegetation in the autumn and its renewed growth in the spring, was the concept of the resurrection of the soul. This concept was usually expressed in terms of sexual love between the earth mother and some male being who, having died in the autumn and remained in the world of the dead through the winter, was reunited with her in the spring. Such emphasis upon productivity led to the worship of sexual organs and often to orgiastic ceremonies; the world over, peasant religion embodies beliefs and practices which are regarded by other socio-cultural types as obscene.

The need for following the agricultural routine around the year with the seasons led to the growth of complicated rituals which could be performed only by special persons. Thus agriculture fostered the formation of a priesthood whose members preserved from year to year the knowledge necessary to propitiate the spirits who held the gift of good crops; obviously this priesthood also attended to the practice of the proper agricultural techniques. Its members, therefore, were more the administrators of a divine order than the prophets of new understanding of spirituality; in their view the performance of routine was more pleasing to the gods than outbursts of fervent emotions.

Since tendencies of religious development of the several types of primitive cultures were brought together in different combinations as peasant-village and nomadic cultures spread through south-western Asia and northern Africa, it is not surprising that at the base of the religions of Mesopotamia and Egypt were beliefs in totemic deities as well as in sky-gods and earth mothers.

THE CINEMATOGRAPH AND RURAL LIFE*

Is it desirable that the cinematograph should spread in rural areas to the same extent as in the towns? This question, asked, as it frequently is, with a touch of apprehension, may be answered in the affirmative, subject to certain reservations.

The dweller in the country or the village lacks the opportunities for observing and comparing, and therefore for discriminating, which cities offer to urban populations. He is therefore less qualified to judge certain aspects of life which he sees on the screen and which are outside his normal experience. His life is much calmer than that of the town-dweller; his work makes less demand on his mental faculties, with the result that, if he does not think very deeply about the scenes which have moved him, his mind at least tends to linger over them in retrospect. Thus his impressions of a film are less superficial and more lasting than those of the town-dweller, though he is less capable of seeing in their true light episodes which have left a deep impression on his mind.....

A. REGIONAL ORGANISATION

Regional organisation would appear to surpass in importance all other aspects of the question. While the dwellers in great cities—in the same country or in different lands—are in many respects alike, the rural populations show marked local traits characteristic of each province. Thus measures to enhance the educational and lessen the harmful influence of the cinematograph may be almost equally effective in the towns of any country belonging to the so-called Western civilisation, but their value becomes strictly relative when they are applied to country-dwellers whose differences are accentuated by any number of spiritual and material factors.

In speaking of the penetration of the cinema into rural life, it seems desirable not to separate the two main aspects of the film.—recreational and educational.

B. RECREATIONAL FILMS

Recreational films offer one of several means by which country-dwellers may be provided with one of the chief attractions of the town, and may thus constitute a possible method of checking the flight from the land. The cinematograph may, indeed, prove a useful factor in arresting this exodus to the towns, so long as the villager is not

*League of Nations—Intellectual Aspects of Rural Life, pp. 27-30.

shown films which will lead to fallacious comparisons between his own simple, hard-working existence and what he takes to be the glittering and easy rewards of life in cities. Most writers on the influence of the cinematograph in rural districts have considered this point of capital importance and emphasised the necessity for a judicious selection of films for country-dwellers.

In general, it would seem that greater attention should be paid to providing recreational films of a healthy and cheerful type for rural audiences. As to their selection, this can hardly be carried out with adequate knowledge except by regional organisations. Only the latter would appear to be qualified to judge of the probable or certain reactions of "their public", to follow and study them and to draw conclusions likely to be of future assistance.

C. EDUCATIONAL FILMS

The power of judging, or at all events of observing, the audience's reactions is quite as necessary—perhaps even more necessary—in the case of the educational film. This is especially true when the object is not merely to raise the general cultural level, but to encourage the public to accept and put into practice suggestions of a practical, economic or social nature, such as the improvement of farming and stock-breeding, the encouragement of a rural artisan class with modern equipment, co-operation, household amenities, hygiene, etc. Here again, regional organisations are best qualified to assume responsibility, for it is not enough merely to understand the psychology peculiar to the rural public in a given area; it is necessary also to be familiar with the special needs of the region concerned, and with its natural resources and potentialities. Country-dwellers will take kindly to progressive ideas only if these do not run counter to their innate common sense, but on the contrary appeal to it and act as a stimulus. If geographical considerations make certain ideas impossible of realisation, it is useless to dwell upon their advantages. The peasant's common sense will rise up in revolt, and subsequent—and more judicious—efforts may thus be doomed to failure.

This does not mean that educational films need be specially produced for each particular region. Regional organisations may well have films made under their direction, to overcome old-established habits cherished by the inhabitants, or to encourage new crops or artisan industries. But when it comes to the world production of films made, or likely to be made, for the benefit of rural audiences, it is clear that many of these will be suited, not only to various regions in a given country, but also to similar regions in other coun-

tries. This similarity of geographical conditions, which is the source of so many other resemblances, may be of great importance in enabling educational films to be shown over wide areas. Moreover, certain subjects are of general interest, quite independently of the way in which they are treated, and are thus suitable for presentation almost anywhere. This applies particularly in the case of educational pictures and news-reels, which, though they aim only at supplying information, may here and there suggest useful ideas which would not otherwise occur to the spectator.

D. MATERIAL FACTORS

The regional organisation would not exist solely for the purpose of choosing films suitable for the country-dwellers within its area and rejecting those likely to exert a harmful influence. It would also draw up programmes, maintaining a just balance between the recreational and educational aspects, and consider how to arrange for cinematographic performances to be given as often and in as many places as possible.

The improvements introduced into modern projectors for sub-standard films—particularly 16-mm. or 17.5-mm. films—make them suitable for medium-sized or small-scale cinemas. Some of these models are conveniently portable, and many of them give very satisfactory results as regards both pictures and sound. The only difficulty may arise in connection with the supply of electric power in districts remote from generating stations. Cine-vans carrying accumulators offer a solution for this problem; they can now be more lightly and less expensively equipped to deal with small projectors.

The supply of sub-standard films will henceforth be abundant and will undoubtedly increase with the rising demand. Almost all educational films are 16 mm. in width, and some firms specialise in reproducing the best "spectacular" films in this format.

In a number of countries, especially in rural areas, cinema managers are somewhat alarmed by this new development in the industry, which goes to prove that the sub-standard film has reached a stage at which its competition is a factor to be reckoned with.

All the necessary facilities are thus available for extending the influence of the cinematograph in rural life. This will mean finally ousting the itinerant showman who trundles from fair to market his stock of old and inferior films bought for a mere nothing and so frequently cut and re-cut, stuck together and defaced by usage that they are no longer of the slightest cultural or artistic value, even though they may once have been good and artistic productions. In-

cidentally, his old-fashioned, broken-down and roughly repaired projector is still only too often a cause of fires and fatal accidents. The rational organisation of the rural cinematograph should put an end to this state of affairs.

Should all private cinematograph enterprise therefore be excluded? By no means. Unless the rural cinematograph organisation is itself prepared to take over the risks of the undertaking, it should, on the contrary, encourage and stimulate private enterprise by every possible means, at the same time, however, offering advice and guidance, and exercising supervision, to prevent the moral, social, cultural and artistic possibilities of the film from being sacrificed to selfish commercial ends.

RURAL LIFE AND LIBRARIES*

Lack of comfort is having an undeniable influence on the exodus from the countryside, but lack of entertainment is perhaps an even more powerful factor. Libraries can play an important part in remedying this situation.

The role of rural libraries might be defined as follows: to provide relaxation for the villagers after their work in the fields; to increase their knowledge of their own particular sphere; to help them in adapting themselves to the part of the territory in which they live; to encourage them to take an intelligent interest in civil life; to preserve and enrich the national soil and to develop a feeling for the family and the community.

There are two possibilities: (*a*) the financial resources of the community and subsidies from outside may enable a permanent library to be set up; (b) in the absence of funds, other methods of supplying the people with reading matter will have to be considered.

A. PERMANENT LIBRARIES

The first hypothesis is obviously the more favourable, but the conditions required are still often lacking, even in countries so advanced in this matter as, for instance, the United States of America.

In towns, libraries may sometimes be merely places where people come to read or borrow books; but in the country, they should serve as social or cultural centres, grouping the various social and intellectual activities of the region and, if necessary, acting as a stimulus. For this purpose, very close contact is required between the librarian and urban movements such as adult education and between agricultural associations and groups such as the American "Home Economics in Education".

It is clear also that there must be close collaboration with the cinema, if there is one in the village; if there is not, the library must endeavour to obtain a projector and show films, at the same time providing a bibliography of works on the same subject.

The village library can organise performances by theatrical companies (in Italy, the "Chariots of Thespis" are doing excellent work on these lines).

*League of Nations—Intellectual Aspects of Rural Life, pp. 35-36.

It should also be a centre for the organisation of lectures on literary, social, or educational subjects, and for group readings, book exhibitions and so on. It need not even close its door to objects other than books, and can gradually become a sort of rural museum. It should endeavour to obtain a fair percentage of books on agricultural and domestic questions and on the folklore of the district.

There is no need to point out the importance of relations with the schoolmaster, who is often also the librarian.

B. TRAVELLING LIBRARIES

Permanent libraries already exist in many countries, but are unfortunately too few; although countries like Denmark have reached the conclusion that rural dwellers prefer permanent libraries, travelling libraries are nevertheless the most rapid means of fostering public reading in the countryside, especially in countries where the farms are isolated and the houses are not grouped together, as, for instance, in Poland and Finland.

Travelling libraries assume various forms. They sometimes consist of boxes containing from twenty to fifty books, sent by a town library for use in the village, where one of the inhabitants, generally the schoolmaster, undertakes to distribute the books and get a new stock when they have all been read.

The books are conveyed in various ways—according to the district—sometimes by post, or by mule in the case of mountain villages (Switzerland) or by boat (Norway). Sometimes motor-vans, recently baptised "bibliobuses" or book-vans, are fitted up specially for the transport of books. They are driven by a librarian and go round the villages every two months or so. The inhabitants choose their books under the librarian's guidance. They may also borrow from one another or ask for books to be sent out, giving a list to the visiting librarian. In the latter case, there is, of course, the question of postage. President Roosevelt has attempted to solve this problem in the United States by according such books the reduced rate in force for newspaper and periodicals; the scheme is being tried out from November 1st, 1938, to June 30th, 1939.

Portable libraries are sometimes placed in cafes or mess rooms; the fire brigade at Ankara is a case in point.

Book-vans in China are not motor driven; they are drawn by coolies, and even carry seats so that people can come and read wherever they stop.

The use of the book-van for providing country-dwellers with reading matter is extending (United States of America, France, Netherlands Indies, Tonkin, etc.), because, thanks to the presence of the librarian and the advice he gives, they promote contact between towns and villages and are able to assist the villagers through a better knowledge of the latter's requirements.

THE RURAL MUSEUM*

General Principles.

The museum is considered here in the widest sense of the term, as part of an organism of a more general character—in other words, as a centre of regional culture. The possibilities and scope of such a centre should not be exaggerated, particularly at the outset. No illusions must be entertained as to the number of workers and peasants who, along with their daily occupation, will show sufficient predilection for and interest in study, reading, and the more refined pleasures of music and the theatre to persevere in these pursuits. One need only remember that, of those members of the middle classes who have had a fair education, very few continue their intellectual pursuits for their own personal satisfaction or from disinterested motives, once their studies are completed. More cannot be expected of workers and peasants. It will therefore be necessary to awaken their artistic consciousness rather than impose such a taste artificially, and this aim can only be done through slow and often indirect action.

The Part played by the Rural Museum among Cultural Institutions as a Whole.

Without going into the details of such action which, so far as museums are concerned, must necessarily proceed hand to hand with other forms of intellectual activity, a certain number of principles may be laid down regarding the nature, organisation and functions of the rural museum.

One of the first requisites is that the cultural centre, and the museum belonging to it, should be readily accessible to the public for which it is intended, and the latter should find there an attractive and convenient place of recreation.

As part of the centre of regional culture, the museum must not be simply a smaller edition of the town museum, and, though its interest will also be regional, it will differ in certain respects from the local museum. The last is an essential point and should be emphasised, since only by bringing out this distinction can the special characteristics of the rural museum, as determined by its aims, its functions, and its public—be made clear.

*League of Nations—Intellectual Aspects of Rural Life, pp. 47-50.

Distinctive Features of the Rural Museum.

In a large urban centre, the museum, as a learned institution, seeks to display within its walls representative types consisting of the best works and objects of all schools. It aims at giving as complete a picture as possible of the evolution of the various forms of art and culture by reference to carefully selected specimens. Its object is to provide the student with valuable material, classified according to the criteria best calculated to facilitate research. In contrast to this selective analytical method, the regional museum aims at providing a synthetic view of all that concerns the history, art, archeology, past and popular traditions of the region concerned.

The rural museum will draw on both types of institution as regards its method and its character. From the urban museum, it will borrow its educational and general features and the principle of selecting fine specimens; from the regional museum, the necessary links with local culture. Its aim being to instruct, it will have to provide a general survey of certain main artistic and ethnographical trends, with the help of methodically selected specimens. Its purpose is to inculcate a feeling for the beautiful in a public whose knowledge of art is restricted. It will have, therefore, to show discrimination in the choice of the works to be displayed and will be guided by methods to which further attention will be devoted later.

If, however, the rural museum is to establish contact with the public—and this would seem to be essential—collections must be made of exhibits recalling the special characteristic features of the region. To collection of general interest will be added other series of exhibits somewhat on the lines of the regional museums, without, however — in the case of rural museum—attempting to supplant these museums which have the well-defined task of collecting *any* material relating to the historical, artistic and cultural aspects of a given region. The rural museum will only exhibit the more striking examples of the evolution and characteristics of the region.

Nature and Constitution of Collections in Rural Museums.

This brief survey of general principles has implicitly determined the material to be collected in setting up a rural museum. The methods of acquiring such material must now be examined. At first sight, it would seem that the type of rural museum envisaged could not acquire a considerable part of this material otherwise than by loans. This applies particularly to general collections, for which inferior specimens would be unsuited. No matter what kind of public is being provided for, its initiation can only be accomplished with the help of

works of artistic value. In the case of regional collections also, there will have to be loans, but here fuller use can be made of reproductions of specimens. In any case, the rural museum will have to collaborate with urban and regional museums, arrange for loans, temporary deposits and travelling exhibitions, and collaborate with museum curators, whose interest in the new institutions must be systematically encouraged.

THE RURAL MUSEUM AND TOURING

Another factor which may prove a useful asset to the rural museum is the development of tourist traffic. The different regions are making increasing efforts to respond to this modern development and the role of the museum is assuming importance as one of the attractions which they have to offer. By opening the eyes of the local population to the beauties and curiosities of the region, the museum may play its part in tightening the bonds between the people and its soil, its treasures and its past. Furthermore, if touring facilities attract tourists to the region, the peasant will experience a sense of pride and disinterested gratification which will tend at the same time to rouse his interest in the rural museum and make him readier to contribute towards its equipment.

MUSEOGRAPHY OF RURAL COLLECTIONS

In connection with the displaying of collections, the distinction between urban, regional and rural museums may be recalled. The scientific and aesthetic arrangement of the big museum must, in this case, give place to a presentation which is first and foremost attractive and indirectly educational. The arrangement of the exhibits, the system of labels, charts and commentaries must all stress any educational possibilities inherent in the various objects. That is the point—once questions of choice and grouping have been settled—on which organisers of rural museums must concentrate, in order to serve the needs of their public.

MEANS OF ACTION, RESOURCES AND ORGANISATION

Again, those responsible for organising the leisure occupations of the rural population must be able to draw on a museum of this kind for material to guide the minds and interests of the population towards more intellectual pursuits. They will find in it subjects and suggestions for popular games, dances and songs, as well as subjects for dramatic treatment and models for fancy work. Local traditions, folklore and handicrafts will be presented in a striking way as a result of exhibitions organised at the museum or elsewhere, constitu-

ting one more link between the museum and the population. Thus exchanges between the village and *its* museum will be set in motion, leading to the development of the study of folklore, the revival of certain crafts, and the preservation of local traditions.

As to the organisation proper of the rural museum, one point should be made clear—namely, that it is quite unnecessary, particularly to begin with, to provide a full-time curator. As a general rule, the leader of the cultural centre will be able to undertake these duties. He will have to apply to the staff of the big regional museums for help in connection with the forming of collections, the technique of exhibiting objects, and the arrangement of the rooms. This will serve to establish useful contact between the two types of institutions, both of which will have everything to gain from this new form of collaboration.

It has already been suggested that the rural museum should be attached to a centre of a more general character, designed to widen the intellectual horizon of the local inhabitants. It would perhaps be more rational to regard the museum as a *nucleus* around which would be grouped the various instruments capable of assisting in the education and intellectual training of the people: such are a library —which would usually be the communal library—and a hall to be used for meetings, lectures, theatrical and cinematograph performances, or any other means of offering the country-dweller a choice and varied fare of entertainment. It would obviously be desirable to run, in connection with this "museum", an actual school of art or of decorative or industrial art, or any other vocational institution, whether it already existed in the district or could be established there as a result of the facilities provided by the museum.

The spirit, the organisation and the programme of the rural museum might thus make it, not only the nucleus of such intellectual activities, but also a link between the activities of everyday life and all the various means the worker could employ to turn his leisure hours to the greatest possible advantage.

AESTHETIC CULTURE OF THE RURAL PEOPLE*

A. RURAL AESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ORGANIZATION

I. *THE PRE-URBAN STAGE*

No people known to us, however hard their lives may be, spend all their time, all their energies, in the acquisition of food and shelter. Even the poorest tribes have produced work that gives to them aesthetic pleasure, and those whom a bountiful nature or a greater wealth of inventions has granted freedom from care devote much of their energy to the creation of works of beauty. In one way or another aesthetic pleasure is felt by all members of mankind.

Since this is true generally, it is also true of agricultural peoples and classes. Previous to the penetration of urban influences the aesthetic and the recreational organization and culture of agricultural peoples were similar to their religious organization.

1. *Association of the arts with other activities.*—The arts were not sharply differentiated from religion, magic, intellectual pursuits, and other activities. Aesthetic elements penetrated to practically all daily occupations, including agricultural work, and they were an inseparable part of religious and other cultural activities.

2. *Participation of the people.*—The artistic and recreational functions of society were performed for the most part by the people themselves; the members of each family were active rather than passive participants; they were both the actors and the audience. Professional artists were relatively rare, though occasionally migratory story-tellers, actors, and singers would visit the rural community.

3. *Familistic character of art.*—Most of the aesthetic and recreational activities were performed by and for the family circle. Rural art and recreational organization were therefore familistic, as was only natural, considering that many of these activities were connected with religious and magical ceremonies, which, as we have seen, were also essentially familistic. The significance, the manifestations, the content, and the symbolism of rural aesthetic activities were permeated with familism. Births, marriages, deaths, and sickness of members of the family were the main subjects of rural art.

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*A Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology, Edited by P. A. Sorokin, C. C. Zimmerman and C. J. Galpin, Vol. II, pp. 445-461, copyrighted in 1932, University of Minnesota.

4. *Simplicity of technique.*—The instruments and means with which agricultural peoples performed their aesthetic functions were predominantly homemade rather than purchased or manufactured in cities. Hence there were no agglomerations of expensive and complex paraphernalia, no expensive, elaborate musical instruments, no collections of sculpture and paintings, no elaborate theatres and stages, no imported professional singers, story-tellers, nor entertainers. The technique of aesthetic and recreational performances was very simple: the natural voice, a talent for story-telling; bodily movements; the branch of a tree, leaves, flowers; a drum, flute, or simple harp. The inner value of the art compensated for this deficiency in technique.

5. *Noncommercial character of aesthetic activities.*—Rural aesthetic and recreational activities were not commercialized, but were performed merely to give enjoyment to the participants and their families; they yielded no profit. Any slight expense was shared by all. In this respect—that the arts were practised and enjoyed for themselves and not for the profit they might yield—rural aesthetic performances differed sharply from the commercialized ones of the city.

6. *Spontaneity.*—Most forms of artistic and recreational activity were performed spontaneously, without any special staging. A story, an epic, or a fairy tale was told at a regular meeting of the village members; a song was sung as a group worked together in the field or of neigrbors were usually followed by singing, dancing, story-was being made; a dance was performed at a gathering of the youth of the community; and so on. The collective activities of the villagers or of neighbors were usually followed by singing, dacing, story-telling, joke-making, or other forms of recreation. An individual would often indulge in singing or in imaginative flights while doing his daily work. Sports and athletics particularly were characterized by spontaneity. The outdoor life and the abundance of muscular exercise required in agricultural work made special gymnasiums, stadiums, and other athletic accomodations unnecessary. The body got enough exercise in the daily activities of rural life.

7. *Special aesthetic and recreational activities.*—In addition to these normal intrafamily and intracommunity forms of recreation and art activity, there were some more pretentious ones, participated in by much larger groups and specially staged. These were performed at the great community festivities or at the local fairs, which usually coincided with the great holidays and local festival days. The people from many villages gathered together; professional artists came from the city and distant places to provide entertainment and make money;

the religious processions were particularly large and impressive. These were "big days" for the rural people of the surrounding countryside. They came into close contact with the art and recreational facilities of the cities and other distant places, learning and enjoying many new things either unknown or uncommon in the life of the village. At the same time their own active role was performed on a larger scale: the youths dressed in their best costumes and danced their choral or round dances in large groups; luxury and magnificence were displayed in the religious ceremonies; competitive games were carried on between various individuals and groups; everyone was excited and in holiday mood; the general atmosphere was intoxicating.

This brief characterization of the distinctive art and recreational activities of rural peoples shows that they tended to be self-sufficient in the satisfaction of their aesthetic needs. Though the urban arts developed from rural roots, they diverged greatly from their sources in the course of time, and when they returned to the rural world they brought back forms quite different from the original patterns.

II. *EFFECTS OF URBANIZATION*

1. *Separation of the arts and recreation from other activities.*—Rural aesthetic and recreational activities changed as urbanization developed. Art and recreation became increasingly separated from daily life; the role of the people became much more passive; and urban professional agencies began to exert a stronger influence. Rural people gradually lost their aesthetic function as they became less and less able to exercise their talents and organize their own recreation and more and more dependent on outside professional agencies. This process has gone so far in some countries that farm men and women must have professional entertainers at every meeting; they do not know how to amuse themselves. Rural art and recreation *per se* have decayed, have become merely a second-hand edition of urban forms. The country has been penetrated by an inferior quality of urban movies, jazz bands, dancing, circuses and theatrical performances; lectures, songs, stories, poetry, and literature; urban clubs, sports, and contests; victrolas and radios, automobiles, and other forms of urban recreation.

2. *Commercialization.*— The fact that the mass of the rural population have become passive spectators and recipients rather than active participants and creators has resulted in the commercialization of arts and recreation. Rural people now must pay to enjoy themselves

and be entertained, since professional entertainers carry on their business for money and profit. When art and recreation become urbanized, the means and instruments of their production necessarily tend to grow more complex and more costly, and there is a tendency for spontaneous performances to decline in favour of the artificial: a professional plans his entertainment in advance, for a given place and time under definite conditions. Rural art and recreation lose more and more of their familistic and local character and become separated from religious and other activities. Under these circumstances their original nature, *Gestalt,* or physiognomy fades, is effaced by urban and cosmopolitan fashions, fads, and trends. Gradually they are completely engulfed by urban influences and eventually they die. This complete effacement has been almost accomplished in some countries, the United States, for instance, where only a few isolated spots retain their typically rural organization. This is the reason for the great difficulty encountered by many rural sociologists in distinguishing between American rural and urban forms of art and recreation.

3. *Specialization and differentiation of agencies.*—There is also a change in the organization of these activities. The problem in an urbanized country community assumes practically the same aspect as in the city. Art and recreation are commercialized as in the city, though the prices are cheaper; it has clubs, musical organizations, and sports similar to the urban, though on a smaller scale. Commercialization is followed by growing specialization and differentiation of professional agencies and the appearance of special managers and advertising agents and similar satellites. It is only natural that the business program should also assume an urban cast. A good organization establishes a large number of agencies, contact with a great number of people, cheap prices, and coordination between the activities of private, county, state, and federal agencies. The urban organizers fail to appreciate the things that constitute the real value of rural arts and recreation; they overlook the decay of originality and beauty and the decrease in the initiative and active participation of the masses of the people.

B. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF AGRICULTURAL AESTHETIC CULTURE

It is just as correct to speak of agricultural and pastoral aesthetic culture as to speak of nomadic, urban, or machine-age aesthetic culture. Of course there is no sharp distinction between agricultural art culture and other art cultures, especially those of the nomadic hunters and fishers. Nevertheless agricultural art has its distinctive traits and constitutes a fairly distinct type.

First, most of the concrete forms are agricultural and rural in content, dealing with the phenomena and the environment of agriculture and with the interests of agriculturists. Rural aesthetic culture, like all others, is based on the eternally human phenomena of birth, marriage, and death and the emotions of love, joy, despair, jealousy, and so forth, but the songs, dances, festivals, pictures, stories, and fairy tales in which phenomena and emotions are depicted are placed in agricultural and rural settings. Secondly, the agricultural arts have, in addition to this general trait, some specific characteristics of technique, rhythm, style, and execution. Thirdly, they display, as does the nomadic art culture, methods of selection and selective survival differing from the commercialized arts. Fourthly, at any given time they usually contain fewer modern and more ancient forms than the urban arts. Furthermore, there are usually some elements of rural art that do not spread to the cities and *vice versa*. Even when the rural and the urban art treat the same object or topic, they depict and interpret it in a different way: rural art ruralizes many urban subjects, and urban art urbanizes many rural subjects. Let us briefly elucidate these points.

I. AGRICULTURAL LORE

The specific environment, especially the occupational environment, of any social group commonly influences the cultural *Gestalt* of that group. Hence it must follow that the arts of pre-urbanized agricultural peoples must be stamped by agricultural and rural characteristics. This deduction is supported by two general findings....

The early forms of most art were developed in connection with religious and magical ceremonies and with working operations. Since the work of rural peoples is agricultural and since their religion and magic have been stamped by agricultural characteristics, it is only natural to expect the cast of their art to be typically agricultural—an expectation well corroborated by the facts, at least among agricultural peoples who are not yet greatly urbanized.

Agricultural characteristics are most clearly manifest in songs, music, dances, stories, proverbs, riddles, literature, pantomimes, festivals, dramatic performances, and similar forms of the arts; they are less conspicuous in designs, ornamentations, architecture, and sculpture, but even here, if properly interpreted, the agricultural stamp is noticeable.

1. *Songs.*—The most common of the work songs of nonurbanized agricultural peoples were those that accompanied collective agricultural occupations—hunting and fishing, grain-grinding or milling,

flax-threshing, corn-threshing, plowing and seeding, fruit-picking, and so forth. (See the readings from Bucher, Ralston, Fenomenov, and others at the end of this chapter.) Some of their religious and magical songs were concerned with love, death, mourning, health, and fertility; others dealt with agricultural activities and were sung as a part of the religious and magical rites connected with spring, summer, fall, and winter festivities; still others honored the grove, wood, field and corn deities, the May tree or May Day, the Corn-mother and Corn-maiden, the Harvest-mother and their later symbolization in the forms of Dionysus, Adonis, Apis, Demeter, Ceres, Pan, Sylvanus, Osiris, and other agricultural deities. Both work songs and religious songs were inseparably connected with daily life and with the religion and magic that centered in agriculture. There were also many songs concerning the eternally human experiences common to all peoples and all stages of development, songs of love and marriage, of war, of funerals, and so forth; but the setting of these was also usually markedly agricultural.....

2. *Tales and legends, dances, festivals, and so forth.*—What we have said of songs is also true of stories, fairy tales, legends, myths, epic poems, dances, and festivals. Early dances, plays, festivals, comic and tragic rites, and athletics and sports were connected either with magic and religious rites or with work. They were performed to venerate certain deities, to protect the interests of the people, and to secure the fulfillment of their desires. The dances and performances in worship of agricultural deities and spirits were probably most important among rural people. Some of them, the so-called mimic or pantomime dances, plays, and carnivals, were nothing more than magico-religious imitations of the movements and actions performed in agricultural work. Such, for instance, were the vintage, harvest, sowing, plowing, sun-turning, and rain-making dances, as well as many forms of phallic dances and performances. Numerous games, plays, carnivals, dramas, tragedies, and comedies were also either magico-religious performances or closely connected with agriculture. Hunting, war, and similar dances are found in some form among peoples of various stages of development and hence are not peculiar to agricultural peoples.

3. *Ornamental arts.*—The agricultural character of the decorative and ornamental arts—architecture, sculpture, and painting—is less noticeable. Yet it seems to exist and to have existed, partly in the patterns themselves and partly in their symbolism. If one examines the illustrations of rural ornamentation and handicrafts in the volumes of Bossert, Vavrousek, Karutz, and others, particularly the first,

he will see that a few motifs are systematically repeated in them, with immense variety and richness of detail, and that these are based on rural environment and occupation: trees, flowers, and plants; horses, cattle, and other domestic animals; birds and fish; and peasant houses. There is not a single design based on a factory, a machine, or any other distinctly urban thing. Other collections depict forms, patterns, and drawings that the peasants have taken from the city, but there are also forms either entirely unknown to the city or representing such a fundamental modification of urban patterns and such "an apparently inexhaustible wealth of motifs and ever changing ornamentation" that they may be regarded as original rural creations, as true peasant art. The peasant art of various European countries, in spite of differences in national culture and "in contradistinction to the various 'style' arts, is possessed of a remarkably consonant, or harmonious, spirit."

Moreover, many pre-agricultural and agricultural peoples give to many seemingly unsymbolic patterns a symbolic interpretation that is very different from that which an outsider would give to the pattern, often a definite agricultural interpretation. On superficial examination many decorations of the agricultural Pueblo tribes appear merely as combinations of straight lines and triangles. But a study of the meanings attached to them by agricultural tribes, "whose whole cult consists essentially in magic performances intended to secure rain," reveals that they represent mountains, rivers, trails, camp sites, hills, fields, villages, lakes, grass, trees, and flowers and that "the same form may be given different meanings." When this is kept in mind, it may be recognized that many patterns contain agricultural symbolism that at first do not appear to do so; for many patterns that an urbanite would interpret as non-agricultural are regarded quite differently by the ruralist, who sometimes attaches to even a purely urban pattern a rural symbolism.

II. *NATURE, PLANT, AND ANIMAL LORE*

A distinctive characteristic of the art and recreation of agricultural and earlier peoples is the large place occupied by plants and animals and by the geographic and cosmic phenomena of nature. The fact that the people live close to nature and are dependent on it is reflected in their stories, songs, tales, proverbs, metaphors, theatrical performances, sculpture, pictures, designs, ornaments, dances—in all forms of art and recreation. Lore concerning plants and animals, the weather, the moon, sun and stars, mountains and rivers, thunderstorms, and so on, exists in a hundred different forms, both simple and complex, realistic and fantastic, and occupies an important place

in the various agricultural arts. Sometimes the phenomena are merely described; sometimes they symbolize human characters and events, comic and tragic, good and bad; sometimes they are objects of veneration, awe, hatred, or love; sometimes they are merely the stage setting for a human epic. Whatever the role given to them, they certainly occupy a large place in rural arts, particularly in those expressed in human speech and actions, such as stories, songs, tales, ceremonies, and so forth. They not only serve as subjects but are constantly alluded to in figures of speech, symbols, comparisons, and so on.

The most common objects in the arts of such peoples are trees, plants, and flowers; the fox, wolf, bull, ram, cow, mouse, cat, dog, hare, horse, swallow, crow, nightingale, hawk, eagle, and fish; the sun, moon, wind, night, and so on; and spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Urban arts tend to emancipate themselves from this natural element and to replace it with artificiality.

III. *IMPERSONALITY AND COLLECTIVITY OF THE ARTS*

Almost all folklore is impersonal; it does not bear the names of the artists who have created it. As a matter of fact, folklore is the result of the creative abilities of many individuals of many generations. The contributions of each are gradually added to those of others, so that the song, tale, ornament, or tune passes through the hands of hundreds of "makers."

All great investigators of the folk arts unanimously agree with Martinengo-Cesaresco that "popular poetry is the reflection of moments of strong collective emotion. The very heart of a people is laid bare in its sagas and songs....The ballad [or folk song] maker only wields his power for as long as he is the true interpreter of the popular will. Laws may be imposed on the unwilling, but not songs."

IV. *LIMITED VARIETY OF FORM AND GREAT ARTISTIC COHERENCE*

The limited variety of form in rural art and its extraordinary coherence, harmoniousness, and originality result partly from the fact that it is created collectively, partly from the emphasis placed on the values created by rural people. Among rural people there are no poets, composers, playwrights, dancers, or other artists who secure their living through their artistic activity. As a rule rural arts have developed spontaneously and incidentally, as a free flow of feelings

and experiences during agricultural work or leisure, not as the result of the intention to secure a living thereby. As Goethe wrote, the "special value of what we call national songs and ballads is that their inspiration comes fresh from nature: they are never gotten up, they flow from a sure spring." For this reason the "unsophisticated man is more the master of direct, effective expression in few words than he who has received a regular literary education." The brothers Grimm, like other great investigators of folk poetry, said they "had not found a single lie in folk poetry." Walter Scott, Dante, Moliere, von Herder, and many others have expressed similar opinions. If some folk poetry bears marks of vulgarity, it is of recent origin. As William W. Newell says, folk poetry "comes to us, in its innocence and freshness, like the breath of a distant and inaccessible garden, tainted now and then by the odors of intervening city streets. But the vulgarity is modern, accidental; the pleasure and poetry are of the original essence."

Art has been created by rural people as a spontaneous manifestation of artistic tendencies and not as the product of long training or apprenticeship or as a principal life work, as has been the case with urban artists. Rural artists create values of a definite kind spontaneously and later give them skillful variations of pattern, tune, or form, but they are not equally skilful in creating or imitating other patterns, forms, and styles. An urban artist does this easily because he is technically skilled, but the rural artist is skilled only in his own spontaneously created art, and he may be rather clumsy in others. As a result there is less variety of form and versatility of technique among rural artists than among professional urban artists. The style of rural art has been further limited by the meagerness of the cross currents of other styles; the city artist, on the other hand, comes in contact with heterogeneous peoples and the art forms of all parts of the world.

V. *NON-PECUNIARY CHARACTER AND SEVERE SELECTIVITY OF THE RURAL ARTS*

A second result of this spontaneity and collectivity in the origin and development of the rural arts is that only the creations of real value had any chance to survive and be diffused, that is, to be taken by others and polished, perfected, and stereotyped. Only those that dealt with important phases of existence, appealing deeply to rural people would survive and hence be adopted, used, and cultivated by them. They expressed only a few deep, important emotions, since the peasants created their paintings, tales, and ornamentations sponta-

neously, having had no pecuniary interests such as hinder the diffusion of aesthetic values in the city. Under rural conditions there is fair competition in the field of creative art for its own sake, and this induces a strong and severe selection based entirely on the artistic value and innate appeal of the created object. An intrinsically valueless object is doomed to die, for it will not appeal to the taste of others and there are no artificial art promoters, no financial pressure, no artificial advertisements, and no professional critics.

"The single existence of folk songs may in general suffice to proclaim them the true artistic voice of some sentiment or feeling common to the large bulk of the people whence they emanate. It is plain that the fittest only can survive—only such as are truly germane to those who say or sing them. A herdsman or a tiller of the soil strings together a few verses embodying some simple thought which came into his head whilst he looked at the green fields or the blue skies. One or two friends get them by heart and possibly sing them at the fair in the next hamlet; if they hit, others catch them up, and so the song travels, for miles and miles and may live out generations. If not, the effusion of our poetical cowherd or tiller dies away quite silently."

This kind of criticism and selection is incomparably more severe, more fair, and more adequate than that of the very best critic, editor or publisher. The creation of a rural individual will survive, spread, and be polished by the hundreds who use it only when it is really beautiful and artistic, appeals to the taste of others, and has so much value for them that they wish to learn it, enjoy it, use it, and perfect it. When creations are used and polished in this way by many individuals and generations whose motives are artistic rather than pecuniary, they often become extraordinarily coherent, harmonious, and original and achieve great inner unity and organic consistency. They are not merely expressions of momentary fancies, artificially created desires, and individual peculiarities, but the incarnations of deep lifelong artistic tendencies, emotions, experiences, and desires common to a multitude of people of several generations. All of them have put their hand and soul into the creation, all of them have felt it, and together they have given it a coherency, an organic harmoniousness, and a unity that make it quite different from the hodgepodge of urban art patched together from fragments of the most diverse styles and values. This simplicity and sincerity of rural art and significance have been emphasized by such writers as Montaigne, Goethe, Moliere, Hugo, Ruskin, Tolstoy, and others.

VI. *PECULIARITIES OF STYLE*

It is obvious that, in its concrete form, rural art varies greatly in different countries, in different periods, and in different forms. Hence it is impossible to make any generalization that would be generally applicable to all its numerous varieties. At best one can only make some empirical general observations that are applicable to many but not to all forms of rural art. With this reservation the following tentative conclusions are presented as some of the fairly common peculiarities of rural art.

1. *Repetition of words.*—The songs, narratives, tales and recitations of pre-agricultural and agricultural peoples abound in repetition of words and expressions. Sometimes they are merely exclamations and ejaculations necessary to the rhythm, as, for example, "Aya, I am joyful; this is good!" repeated many times at the beginning and the end of each verse; "Ay! oukhnem!" repeated many times in the well-known song of the "Volga Boatman."

"(Further, folk tales and poetry) in their technical and poetical language represent a very special and rare literary specimen. It seems pertinent to mention here some of their qualities:

(i) A very rich selection of similies, especially negative—"It was not the white snow on the field that whitened the view, it was the snowwhite head of the old Cossack, Ilia Murometz, that whitened the horizon."

(ii) The manner of beginning an epic with special introductory harmonies, and of bringing it to an end with special finale which was in the repertory of "narrators".

(iii) The method of reiteration of words and of whole episodes in order to enhance the impression and to infuse into the hearer a special mood.

(iv) The manner of undervaluing the hero in order to show afterwards more vividly his qualities.

(v) The method of artificial retardation in "narrating" so as to impress its importance, et cetera.

There should also be mentioned the special "written tonality," the musico-vocal instrumentation which represents one of the chief beauties of many folk epics.

The peculiarities of the language and rhythmic structures of folk poems create that "attunement" which cannot be expressed and

which is best appreciated when heard sung by "narrators" themselves who are becoming rarer and rarer.

Only when all the above is taken into consideration can one understand the deep psychological importance of the dynamics of folk epos, rich in conjoint prepositions with many verbal predicates, and in "endearing" and diminutive "terminations."

The concrete forms of the repeated words, ejaculations, expressions, or verses vary, but their use is rather common in rural literature.

2. *Rhythm.*—The rhythm of the various agricultural work songs varies, apparently to correspond to the rhythm of the bodily movements in a particular type of agricultural work. Just as the rhythm of agricultural work is different from that of machine work in factories, so the rhythm of agricultural songs is different from that of many contemporary urban songs. Even in agricultural songs other than work songs the rhythm is flavoured with the biological pulsation of life rather than with the mechanical beat of machinery. The former is sometimes slow, sometimes very vivacious, but generally organic in its nature, while many contemporary urban rhythms are notably mechanical. It is impossible to describe agricultural rhythm in words; it can be felt only when one hears it. Nevertheless, one familiar with folk songs can easily feel that the agricultural songs have a peculiar rhythm that is expressive of the agricultural milieu.

3. *Melodies.*—The tunes of agricultural songs are also the product of the agricultural milieu. In some of them one feels the loneliness of a shepherd on the meadows or on the mountains, in others, the spaciousness of the fields and open spaces, in still others, the mystery of the earth's fertility, the slow and organic flow of the life in the village, joy and sadness, wild vitality and emotions, love and veneration, or the longing and despair of agricultural peoples. All these emotions and images are expressed, either vaguely or clearly, in beautiful tunes quite different from the urban expressions of the same emotions.

4. *Color combinations.*—In their decorations, costumes, and ornamentations the agricultural arts are marked by great richness, which may be symbolized by a meadow covered with red, blue, white, green and purple flowers. One rarely sees the monotony of grey, brown, and dark colors so characteristic of city buildings and milieu and even of city costumes.

5. *Curved lines.*—Among agricultural people the lines composing a design or ornament and governing the style of costume are domi-

nated by harmonious curved lines and among urban people by straight lines. The trees, plants, animals, surface configurations, and clouds that constitute the rural environment are beautiful combinations of curved lines. Rural houses, rural costumes (which are rarely ironed), the entire rural milieu, are rarely divided rigidly into geometrical squares and blocks, but are composed of curved lines. Cities with their planned, measured, and rigidly apportioned streets, their many-storied buildings resembling a series of boxes, their formal dress and top hats, are a symbolic agglomeration of straight lines. No doubt some straight lines are employed in rural art, just as some curved lines in urban art, yet the general difference does exist and may be felt by an attentive observer.

6. *Spontaneity.*—In all forms of urban art there is an intangible quality that we may call rationalism, mechanical geometry, preconceived quantitative apportionment. Rural art impresses us as a manifestation of natural organic life, a free overflow of vitality seldom preconceived, rationalized, or deliberately created. It is produced by the free play of a vital energy that is not at all concerned with geometric formulas, that creates intuitively, not rationally.

This is a very imperfect description of the intangible qualities peculiar to rural art, which are comprehensible only to those who have felt them, who have frequently heard, seen, touched, and observed them.

INFLUENCE OF CONDITIONS OF RURAL LIFE ON RECREATION*

1. RELATION BETWEEN THE ORGANIZATION OF RECREATION AND AGRARIAN STRUCTURE

For a proper understanding of the special aspects of the organization of recreation in rural areas, it must be realized that rural life is highly varied in form, depending on the agrarian structure of the country or region considered.

A whole series of factors, such as the nature of the soil, the height of the area above sea-level, the climate and the natural conditions of communication on the one hand and the distribution of land, the nature of production and the development of means of transport on the other, as also factors of an historical, moral, intellectual and social order, determine in each zone the kind of life suited to it and create the environment into which the organization of the recreation of the population must be fitted.

The kinds of life peculiar to the different zones together form a whole gamut in the social life of a country. At one end of the scale, there are the purely rural zones, followed by zones affected by urban communities, and, by the time the other end of the scale is reached, the influence of industrial and commercial surroundings deprives the life of the zone of its special rural characteristics.

In each zone, life is organized primarily in villages, parishes or rural communities, the life of each being as a rule quite distinct from that of the rest. The rural community is thus the natural unit for the organization of recreation.

It is obvious that the possibility of organizing recreation facilities must differ with the social composition of the population of the community. Very often, the persons most interested in organizing recreation are not directly concerned with agriculture. The importance of the question of the social composition of the population varies also with the predominant type of farming. An agricultural population composed of workers engaged on family farms will take a different part in the organization of recreation from that taken by the permanent workers of large estates or by day labourers.

*League of Nations—Recreation in Rural Areas, pp. 7-14.

The possibilities of organization depend also on the density of the population and the form of settlement. The population may be sparse and live on scattered farms spread over the whole district, or it may be concentrated in communities, ranging from the smallest hamlets to large villages and country towns with a predominantly agricultural population or a mixed population of agricultural and industrial workers.

The combination between various demographic structures and the various types of occupational and social composition of the rural population obviously gives rise to widely divergent conditions with regard to the organization of recreation. For example, in a village with a mixed population of peasants and handicraftsmen, conditions are essentially different from those in a community formed by the workers employed on a large estate, and will be still more different from those in a zone consisting of a scattered population of smallholders.

The more scattered the population over the area of the rural community, the greater the importance, from the point of view of organizing recreation, of the condition and state of repair of the road system and of the means of private and public transport available.

2. RELATION BETWEEN THE ORGANIZATION OF RECREATION AND THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITION AND STANDARD OF LIVING OF THE AGRICULTURAL POPULATION

It is generally recognized that the economic and employment conditions of the rural population and its standard of living are factors tending to hamper the development of recreation facilities in the countryside. Hours of work are long, income is low and housing conditions and the level of education are unfavourable to a rational use of spare time.

A more detailed examination will show, however, that there are considerable differences, depending on the category of agricultural population concerned and its kind of life.

The majority of the agricultural population in nearly every country consists of persons engaged in *family undertakings* living in essentially agricultural areas. The occupation of the persons employed on the family holding—members of the family and farm servants engaged for the season or by the year—depends on the distribution of manual work over the agricultural year and may vary in intensity with the season and the type of crop. Their degree of occupation reaches a climax at certain periods, but hours of work

over the year as a whole are more or less regular, being shorter during the winter. Whatever the season, however, hours of work are never limited with complete uniformity in family undertakings, for the working-day does not end when the worker returns from the fields. Once he is back at the farm, cattle have to be fed and all kinds of odd jobs have to be done, which often take a considerable time.

During the summer and the main seasons of agricultural work, the working-day begins at sunrise or even earlier, especially during the ploughing season. During the harvest and threshing season, work often continues during the night. At some periods, work is carried on with such intensity that it leaves hardly any spare time during the day. Consequently, any combined action for the organization of recreation necessarily has to slow down or to be suspended altogether.

During the winter, outdoor work is reduced in quantity, but there are still a number of jobs to be done in cowsheds and indoors in general. Sometimes, the members of family undertakings carry on a subsidiary occupation in some home industry during the slack season, such as weaving, embroidery, woodworking, basket-making, etc.

In family undertakings, the women's time is even more fully occupied than the men's. There is no division of labour or tasks resulting in the exclusion of women's work. Women have to spend part of their hours of work in the fields, and especially in cowsheds in milking, raising young cattle, looking after the poultry, the pigs, the vegetable garden, etc. In addition, they have to prepare food and fit in all their other household jobs, besides which it should not be forgotten that they are alone responsible for the task of bringing up the children.

For family undertakings, combined action for providing recreation facilities can be taken only during the slack season. But there are serious difficulties in the way of such action especially in zones with a scattered form of settlement, where the houses sometimes lie miles away from the village or from the railway centre which, in certain countries, takes the place of the village. Bad weather and the unsatisfactory state of the roads in the winter prevent people from moving about during this season, thus hampering gatherings and increasing the causes of isolation.

For various reasons, small farmers are also often in a difficult economic situation which is a further serious obstacle to action aiming at the development of cultural and intellectual life.

Social life in zones where family undertakings predominate finds expression as a rule in the neighbourliness of the different families and their economic, spiritual and intellectual relations with the village or rural community.

The *permanent workers* on large estates or farms worked on the system of extensive cultivation are placed in conditions that differ profoundly from those of workers in family undertakings. Collective agreements are becoming more and more widespread and contain for such permanent staff clauses concerning hours of work, the daily rest, the Saturday half-holiday and Sunday rest, annual holiday with pay, etc. The length of their working-day varies with the season from a minimum of from six to seven hours to a maximum of from 10 to 12 hours. As a rule, however, they are entitled to work a holding on the estate on which they are employed, which they cultivate in common, assisted by their families, or else they are allotted a small plot of land for growing vegetables and keeping poultry and pigs. Such occupations naturally mean an extension of their working-day.

The permanent workers who form the established staff of large and medium-sized estates usually live with their families on the estate itself. If the estate comprises a large number of families and forms a homogeneous nucleus, it acquires the character of a small village community, in which cultural development and the organization of recreation in general depend on the spirit of initiative of the members of the community, the goodwill of the owner of the estate and the means that he may provide. In conclusion, it may be said that the permanent staff of large agricultural estates, to a certain extent, presents all the factors necessary for the organization of recreation—namely, residence at the place of work, hours of work limited by regulation, conditions of life that are modest but secure, in consequence of permanent employment throughout the year. In actual fact, it happens quite often that recreation sections, similar to those found in industrial undertakings, are formed on such estates.

The situation of *temporary workers*, ordinarily known as day labourers, differs from that of permanent workers. Although their hours of work proper are the same, the day labourer, even more often than the permanent worker, is engaged after his working-day on the direct cultivation of a small holding or allotment or on non-agricultural work. The fact that day labourers usually live in hamlets or villages makes the distance each has to cover to reach his work-place of capital importance. His journey time is not always included in the hours of work fixed by the head of the undertaking. During the

busy season, he leaves the village usually well before sunrise and returns only late in the evening. Sometimes even, when the farm on which they work is far away or daily means of transport are not available, the day labourers have to spend long periods in temporary buildings at their actual place of work. During such seasons, the village seems dead. It recovers its animation later, when the workers return and when their long period of unemployment begins. The amount of occupation in agriculture over the year is usually insufficient to secure to day labourers earnings that would allow of a reasonable standard of living combined with security and tranquillity in the face of possible unemployment. Their jobs as wage-earners are intermittent; the nature and place of their work is constantly changing; and their occupations are essentially seasonal. Their annual income remains insufficient even if they can earn money from other sources, and the greater part of what they earn has to be devoted to food, their expenditure on housing, clothing, recreation, etc., being reduced to a minimum.

It is this special situation of day labourers which is an obstacle to combined action for recreation, even though this category of workers has the twofold advantage of a concentrated form of settlement and regulated hours of work.

Housing conditions are an important factor in the utilisation of spare time, especially in thinly populated districts. A suitable dwelling is thus a necessary condition for the proper use of leisure. Unfortunately, the state of dwelling—housing in the country is often far from satisfactory. In a general way, it may be said that to persons interested in the betterment of rural living conditions, the problem of rural housing lies at the root of all the rest. Enquiries made in various countries show that a number of peasants' houses are in need of repair or of being reconstructed on other principles. The same enquiries show that the housing conditions of wage-earners are even worse than those of small farmers. Often large families are crowded together in a few rooms, sometimes even into one room, and, in some countries, have to share their dwelling with their live-stock. Comfort and lighting conditions are inadequate, and the dwellings are unsatisfactory from the point of view of hygiene and health.

Lastly, the general level of *education* in rural districts forms an obstacle to the development of certain desirable forms of recreation. In rural areas, the means of instruction and education cannot be compared to those to be found in towns. There are not many schools and these are sometimes situated far from the children's homes.

Instruction is often given by one teacher only, who has to be responsible for all the classes. The pupils' attendance depends on weather conditions and on the intensity of agricultural work, so that the children who leave school with a certificate cannot always be said to have laid a sure and lasting foundation of the elements of culture needed to enable them to continue their education on their own initiative, by recourse to the many openings for adults that exist today in the form of public libraries, periodicals, the wireless, etc.

Any study of the labour and economic conditions and the standard of living of the large masses of the rural population must inevitably lead to the conclusion that the development of recreation facilities in the countryside is determined not only by the degree of organization and education, but even more by the improvement of living conditions, without which there can be no real progress.

3. FIRST STEPS TOWARDS COMBINED ACTION FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF RECREATION

It would be a serious mistake, however, to believe that agriculture as a type of life has hitherto been entirely lacking in leisure and in any combined action for its utilisation. But in the past, when the range of rural communities was limited, and the isolation of the peasants more marked, the organization of recreation after the working-day was over was altogether individual and was as a rule confined to a game of cards or of skittles in the nearest inn or to going out shooting.

On rare occasions, wakes might be held on winter evenings in stables or the like, which brought together the whole village but had no definite programme. The women would spin or weave or knit; the men would chat or tell old tales handed down from one generation to another, while busying themselves with the repair of small tools. Sometimes the monotony of the evening would be cheered by the playing of a concertina or other popular instrument. From time to time, lectures or literary evenings would be held in the parish hall or the inn, which would be followed by dances organized on the initiative of a group of young people, especially during the carnival.

Spontaneous concerted action among the peasants for the organization of recreation was the result only of remnants of tradition; it was taken by one or more villages in a particular agricultural area and was limited to a few days in the year. Such were, and still are, the collective festivities organized in connection with a religious feast or some event connected with the seasons and taking place at the end of each main group of agricultural tasks. The preparation of these

festivals sometimes needs long weeks of work and all the young people of the village share in it. During them, agricultural work is stopped and the whole rural population of the locality and neighbouring villages takes part without distinction.

In recent years, the glory has faded from these local occasions and the organization of recreation has been adapted to the new forms of social life. At the same time, there have been profound changes in the working-conditions and material, moral and intellectual life of all classes of land workers.

The isolation of the peasant is disappearing owing to forces for which he is not responsible. The development of industry is attracting the younger and more enterprising elements of the village. The result of the exodus is to establish more constant relations between industrial centres and the countryside. Thus rural districts become acquainted with new ideas and the desire to learn more and better. Such relations become even closer when well-to-do farmers send their children to town to be taught in secondary schools.

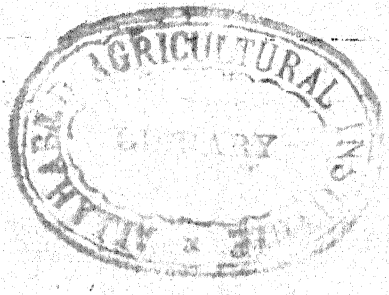
But in the countryside, too, education is improving nearly everywhere. New schools are being opened and new buildings constructed. Evening classes are organized for adults, and also technical continuation courses. The teaching staff is being enlarged and is better prepared for the requirements of rural life. The development of education and its extension to increasingly large sections of the rural population are preparing the ground for an understanding of the economic, social and intellectual problems, and one result is that young people in particular are turning towards more varied forms of recreation. Just as the worker on the land looks further afield in consequence of his desire to learn and to know more, so he turns also to forms of mutual benefit, trade union and co-operative organizations.

The conditions of permanent workers and especially of day labourers are undergoing far-reaching changes where strong trade unions are able to group them and give them an education, a civic conscience and better conditions of life and work. In some countries, the agricultural workers, in their trade unions or their co-operatives for labour and cultivation in common, have already engaged in combined action for the organization of recreation. Such trade unions and co-operatives have built houses of their own, which have become the political, economic and cultural centre of the village community. In some areas, inhabited mainly by day labourers, such buildings, often the most imposing in the village, serve at once

as the headquarters of the trade union or co-operative, the local food store, the savings bank, etc. They have also become the centre for the recreation of organized workers, absorbing all their spare time except that devoted to meals and rest. Women and children also take part in the life of the workers' centre, and thus create a new form of collective village life.

Libraries, reading-rooms, halls for meetings, entertainments and dancing, skittle-alleys, refreshment rooms, choral societies, bands, societies for sports, dramatic entertainments, excursions, etc., have been organized. These agricultural workers' centres are being developed, are federating and, albeit, with distinctive features of their own, are working on the same lines as the similar organizations of urban workers.

The other workers on the land are organizing on similar lines. Economic and social needs are driving small farmers to depart from tradition and to combine around the nucleus of their old parish organization or their union or co-operative by establishing constant relations between their farms and the collective services that the community has had to provide in the village. In areas where family undertakings predominate, there have been profound changes in conditions of life and the standard of culture. Trade and co-operative organization in every country is becoming more and more widespread in all its forms and for all the economic operations that small farmers have to undertake in common. Similarly, the relations between the producers themselves are becoming closer, as also those between them and consumers. The result is that in several countries village unions are formed comprising nearly all the producers. These bodies, under whatever name, are usually attached to existing denominational or political institutions, and like the organizations of agricultural workers, are undertaking the organization of cultural conditions, sports and recreation in general. From having been a negative factor with regard to the organization of recreation, family undertakings are thus becoming positive factors, owing to the combined action and trade and co-operative organization of small farmers.



SIGNIFICANT TRENDS AND DIRECTION OF CHANGE*

By

C. C. TAYLOR

The Direction and Measurement of Change

In seeking to measure change by comparing American rural life today with what it was a century ago, one is confronted with the fact that it was not the same everywhere then and is not the same everywhere today. In a country of the size of the United States the diversities are so many that a discussion of major trends must confine itself to those that are operative in all farming areas, even though they may be far more pronounced in some parts of the country than in others. Since a comparison of trends and direction of change among the major type-farming areas or belts of the country was presented in Chapter 27, in this chapter differences between regions are largely ignored and attention is focussed on over-all trends.

The Lessening of Rural Isolation

Although there are remote areas of the country where isolation is greater today than it was a century ago near Boston, New York, Philadelphia, or Charleston, isolation in rural areas is in general decreasing. In fact, it is even less than it was a decade ago. And yet, rural isolation has increased in some periods of our national life. For instance, it increased for most farm people during the one hundred years that followed the colonial period. Colonial farms were small and largely self-sufficient, and families generally lived close together, many of them in villages or on plantations. So, even though they had no automobiles, telephones, radios, or newspapers, they were not isolated from one another. When, however, the westward movement got under way on an extensive scale after 1790, individuals and families broke away from these compact colonial settlements and moved into the interior at hundreds and hundreds of points. Isolation increased for those who moved westward, although it of course decreased for those who remained in the older settled areas. Since those who went West were moving into isolation, this trend continued for about a century until 1890 or 1900 when there were no more frontier areas to settle.

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*Rural Life in the United States by C. C. Taylor, A. F. Raper, L. J. Ducoff, E. A. Schuler, M. J. Hagood, J. D. Ensminger, T. W. Longmore and W. C. McKain, pp. 522-533, copy righted in 1949, Alfred A. Knopf.

For the past fifty years isolation has been decreasing for all farm people, and it will undoubtedly decrease at an accelerated rate in the future. Social isolation is not measured by mere distance but basically by lack of human contacts. Automobiles and good roads, newspapers and rural free delivery, telephones and radios are the instruments that have progressively reduced rural isolation. New inventions such as television and airplanes, plus other means of transportation and communication, will undoubtedly maintain this process of change that has been so pronounced during the last few decades.

Commercialization of Agriculture

Next in importance to decreasing isolation are changes in the system of farm enterprises. Relatively small, family-owned and family-operated farms were maintained by most, though not all, early American colonists. Not only were the family-owned farms relatively small, but the number of cultivated acres per farm was still smaller, for farming had to be done by hand or at best with ox power. Commercialization and mechanization of farming have tended to enlarge farms both in terms of acres and of size of business enterprise. Change in the size of the farm enterprise has not, however, been as important as changes in techniques and in the people's attitudes and value systems which have been affected by the emergence of commercial farming.

Over the decades and generations, American agriculture has made almost a complete shift from what may be called peasant farming to commercialized farming. Some students of agriculture and rural life think that the United States is the only country that has so far developed without peasant farming; others insist that the trend away from peasant farming has taken place everywhere in the world, including the United States. Neither of these points of view is wholly true, for there are still many farmers in the United States who are peasant-like in many of their characteristics. Their deepest attitudes and loyalties to farming are not those of money-making, which characterizes commercial farming. The basic psychology of the peasant farmer is conditioned by his great attachment to the land itself and his love for living, growing things. Peasant farmers live, so to speak, largely under their own vines and fig trees and feel that they are co-creators with God and nature in the production of the necessities of life. They cherish the ownership of farms and measure their worth in terms of the rural ways of life rather than in terms of monetary values. There are still millions of peasant

farmers in the world, and some American farmers still have peasant attitudes. But there can be no doubt that these attitudes have steadily diminished over the decades of American agricultural evolution.

Today, tens of thousands of Americans own land that they do not farm, and hundreds of thousands of others farm land that they do not own. "Factories in the fields" are becoming more and more common; and many farms, if not most, are for sale if the purchase offers are greater than the owners' monetary evaluation of them. Farming as a complete occupation and as a way of life has steadily given way to farming as a business enterprise. There are few, if any, places in the world where this shift has been more universal and so marked as it has been in the United States during the past seventy-five years; and there are few, if any, indications that this trend will change.

From Hoe Farming to Mechanized Farming

There are still some hoe, mattock, sickle, and flail farmers in the United States, while on the other hand, there are great mechanized farming areas outside of the United States. But in no other nation in the world, except possibly for some parts of Canada, Argentina, and Russia, has there been so steady and universal a transition from man power to horsepower to motor power as in the more fertile and more level farming areas of the United States. During the period of the westward expansion, farm work progressed from the use of hand tools to the use of ox power and then to the use of horsepower implements. These included machines for practically all the major time-and-energy-consuming tasks—plows, planters, cultivators, mowers, binders, threshing machines, and so forth. The rapid shift was stimulated by easy ownership of relatively large farms located on open prairie lands and by the increase in commercialized farming. This production for the market was made feasible by the development of steamships and railroads. Farming evereywhere in the United States is more mechanized today than it was a generation ago, and it will undoubtedly be still further mechanized in the future.

The increase in mechanized farming has generally been looked upon as desirable, although it has almost everywhere been accompanied by a decline in the number of farm families. Just now, however, as the mechanization of cotton production is beginning to get under way, some people are greatly concerned about what will happen. They envision farmers being pushed off the land, the closing out of some local schools and churches, and the migration

of families to new areas. These are real problems, but one should not overlook the fact that there have been great problems involved in the very lack of mechanization of cotton production. That lack resulted in small farms, low incomes, child labor, poor housing, excessive soil depletion, and inadequate medical care for a great proportion of the lower income families.

The first thing most people think of in relation to mechanization is the extent to which it has reduced irksome work, and this is important. "The plowman" less than ever before "homeward plods his weary way," and "the man with the hoe" less than ever before is "bent with the weight of the centuries." An increasing number of plowmen ride on the machines they operate, and motor power lifts more and more of the heavy loads. The monotony of oldtime farm work, however, did not consist solely of lifting heavy burdens—a great deal of it lay in the endless repetition of hand work, such as dropping seed into the ground, cultivating land with hoes and one-horse plows, and harvesting corn or cotton one ear or boll at a time, and many of these tasks had to be done in a stooping posture. Thus, the use of machines to do routine and detailed tasks has been a significant advance. It is in this kind of work that the greatest changes will probably be made in the future, for they may well extend to harvesting cotton, potatoes, sugar beets, and other crops, and to performing farmyard chores.

Mechanization has also increasingly brought conveniences and comforts previously unknown in rural life. The lessening of tedious tasks increases comfort; the installation of electric lights and water and heating systems, and the use of motor transportation, are both conveniences and positive pleasures. All these technologies, plus others, are a part of mechanization which has been adopted much more generally in rural areas in the United States than elsewhere. In Argentina, for instance, farmers use the largest farm machines made, but there are few automobiles and trucks on farms, and the residences of thousands of otherwise mechanized farms are still lighted by kerosene lamps and heated by open fires. In the United States farm mechanization is on the march, and more and more it includes all phases of farm life.

From Folk Beliefs and Practices to the Use of Science

Throughout the history of American agriculture there has been a steady shift from a trust in folk beliefs to the adoption of scientific practices in farming. To be sure, there are still some farmers who plant their crops by the signs of the moon, and there are only a few

farmers who do everything by precise scientific formulae. In such countries as Denmark, Sweden, Holland, and Switzerland, a larger per cent of the farmers are avowedly more scientific than in the United States. But these facts do not diminish the significance of the increasing adoption of science in American agriculture.

Most farmers make use of science without themselves being scientists. They use seeds and breeds which geneticists have perfected and machines which stimulate—in fact, to some extent force—proper planting and cultivation. However, the farmers' knowledge of the sciences of breeding and feeding, of plant and animal diseases, and of soil conservation is steadily increasing. They usually wait a little while for new things to be tested, but the day is literally past when any large number of American farmers use superstitious beliefs to answer practical questions about farming.

The application of science to American agriculture was greatly stimulated by Jefferson, Washington, and Franklin, and by agricultural societies and fairs that early began to promote better varieties of crops and breeds of animals. During the last seventy-five years, through the establishment of agricultural colleges, experiment stations, the Agricultural Extension Service, and vocational agricultural high schools, there has been developed in the United States the greatest gamut of agricultural scientific and educational institutions and agencies to exist any place in the world. The result is that most of the rest of the world today turns to the United States for leadership in the agricultural sciences, while an increasing majority of American farmers accept science as the trusted method of agricultural improvement. This trend, too, will probably be accelerated in the future.

Shifting of Processes from Farms to Factories

In the sense that farmers no longer practise many of the artisan functions which they used to practise, farming has steadily become more specialized. Less than a hundred years ago tanning, shoe cobbling, wagonmaking and many toolmaking functions were carried on by farmers themselves—most often by a few farmers in each area who were specialists in these processes. Moreover, in 1820 two-thirds of the manufacture of clothes was done in homes, and not more than fifty years ago wheat and corn were ground chiefly in country mills, many of which were operated by farmers. It is only recently that slaughtering, the manufacture of dairy products, and considerable canning and baking have shifted from farms into factories and other processing plants.

Because of the shift of practically all major processing functions out of farm homes, the American farm family is nowhere near as self-sufficient as it was in the past. It now specializes primarily in the production of raw food and fibre products, sells these in the market, and purchases most of its finished goods. There has always been considerable protest to this loss of the farm family's self-sufficiency, and today there are strong advocates of returning many of these processes to the farm, or at least to the local rural community. To the extent that small processing machines can perform these functions by motor power or electric power, and to the extent that farmers' co-operatives may operate larger processing plants, there need not be any economic loss through the decentralization of factory processes. But the trend is in the other direction, and it will probably not be turned back easily.

The Loss of Folk Arts and Skills

With the disappearance of practically all the artisan functions from the farm and with the decline in handicrafts, many folk arts and skills of previous farmer generations are being lost. Most farmers are still capable of semiskilled carpentry and blacksmithing, but only a few farmers in relatively few sections of the country still retain the skills of making such things as ax-handles and singletrees, and literally none of them today has competence in cobbling and coopering. The results are twofold: (1) they must depend upon making enough money out of the production of raw products to purchase many of the things that their fathers and grandfathers produced for themselves; and (2) they have lost their expertness in many things for which they still have some need in farming. There are those who believe that rural life has lost a great deal of the creativeness that was due to the close relationship between artisanry and traditional art. And they say that once farm people begin to lose their artisanry, the folk arts, which are almost altogether a creation of country people, soon begin to decline.

There is probably no way of measuring the comparative gains and losses that have resulted from the decline of folk arts and skills as against the increased knowledge of science, the increased capacity to operate highly complex machines, and such understanding as exists among farm people of electricity and motor power. There can be no doubt, however, that the American farmer is considerably less of an artist than are most peasant farmers throughout the world.

Increase in Part-time Farming

A steadily increasing number of persons make their living partly by employment in agriculture and partly by employment in non-agricultural occupations and professions. This is an interesting trend, especially in view of the fact that farmers have given up many of the processing functions that were at one time carried on by farm people. There are no precise data on the off-farm work of farmers for any period preceding 1929, but during that year 723,269 farm operators did 100 or more days of work off their farms. Ten years later 943,581 farm operators did the same amount of off-farm work. Furthermore, there are many farm persons other than operators who do off-farm work, so that counting both operators and others there were 1,318,000 farm persons who had part-time employment in off-farm work in April 1930, and in April 1946 there were 3,050,000. In addition there were, of course, many farm operators and other farm persons who did off-farm work amounting to less than 100 days, while there were also many urban dwellers who did some or a great deal of farm work. Whether off-farm work is custom work done on other farms with large and expensive machinery, or whether it is part-time agricultural and part-time industrial work, the fact seems to be that operating a farm is something less than a full-time occupation for an increasing number of farmers. In New England, New York, and New Jersey, and to a lesser extent in some other sections of the country, there is an increasing number of what may be called rural residents living on farms. Some of them are retired farmers, some are retired business men and industrialists, and some carry on part-time farming. In tourist and recreation places there are also a great many people who operate tourist homes or camps located in farm areas.

These combined trends have gone so far that only in the hearts of such major farming regions as the cotton, corn, and wheat belts are such phenomena not readily observable. Even in the range-livestock areas "dude ranches" furnish recreation for nonfarm people. But to describe all these trends as a shift towards part-time farming is of course not a good way to cover them. The change is actually that the occupation of farming is steadily diminishing as the total concern of farm people.

Decreasing Proportion of Population in Rural Areas and on Farms

For at least a hundred and twenty-five years there has been a relative decline in the proportion of people who live in rural areas. In 1820 over nine-tenths of all the people in the United States lived

outside of cities and towns of 2,500 population, whereas in 1946 less than two-fifths did so. The proportion of the nation's population living on farms also decreased, although census figures are not available on the farm population for the earlier decades. Still, between 1910 and 1946 the proportion of the nation's population living on farms decreased from over a third to less than one-fifth. In terms of farm production, the United States is still the greatest agricultural nation in the world, but it has become such a great industrial and commercial nation that it is no longer predominantly agricultural.

When about 1890 farm people and public leaders became aware of the movement of population from farms to towns and cities, there was considerable concern about the "depletion of the countryside". There are still those who deplore this movement. It should be apparent, however, that such a population shift is an inevitable result of the increasing mechanization of farming, which decreases the need for man power on farms, and of the increasing employment available in other occupations and professions. Thus, between 1930 and 1940 there was a net loss, through migration from farms, of approximately 1,200,000 farm youth between the ages of 15 and 20 years.

There is cause for concern about the fact that many youths born and reared on farms move to cities without adequate training to participate successfully in industrial and commercial occupations. There is also cause for concern about the fact that many farm families are living on farms of inadequate size or on submarginal lands which make it impossible for them to compete successfully with mechanized, large-scale farmers. Because this trend in population movement will probably continue steadily, there is every reason for vocational schools in agricultural areas to train farm youth for nonagricultural as well as for agricultural occupations, and for families living on inadequate farms or submarginal lands to be assisted to migrate successfully.

Decline in the Operation of the Agricultural Ladder

For many generations it was comparatively easy for a young man to start as an agricultural wage worker and move into farm ownership either directly or by climbing the agricultural ladder from hired man to tenant to owner. Today only a relatively small proportion of those who start their occupational careers as hired farm laborers ever become owners of farms. In fact, data are available to show that from 1880 to 1935 an increasing number of farmers were stalled

on the tenancy rung of this ladder. The majority of others who started as hired men on farms during this period apparently moved out of agriculture altogether.

Data are not available to show how many or what per cent of those who a generation ago started in agriculture as hired laborers have shifted out of agriculure, have become tenants or owners, or still remain hired men. Practically, all studies of the agricultural ladder show only that a given per cent of present owners and tenants were at one time hired farm laborers; they do not show what per cent of those who started as farm laborers at any given time or place later became farm owners. Nevertheless, a number of studies indicate that there is a tendency for sons of farm owners to become owners, whereas this is not so for sons of tenants, much less for sons of farm laborers. Because of the absence of precise data on the agricultural ladder, one is probably right in questioning whether that ladder worked as well in the past as is generally believed. Still, it did undoubtedly work much better during the period when agriculture was expanding and lands were relatively cheap than it has in recent decades.

There are a number of factors that will probably keep the agricultural ladder, as it is conceived in American tradition, from operating anywhere near effectively in the future. The capital investment that is required to become a farm owner or even a substantial farm tenant is now so great in areas where a good living can be made on a farm that this capital cannot be supplied by savings accumulated through wage work in agriculture. In fact, it is today almost impossible for a person to start as a farm hired hand and ultimately become the owner of a good farm. A young man may begin by doing some farm labor for hire, but unless he receives financial assistance he will probably never be able to buy a farm except in an extraordinarily poor land area where it is difficult to earn a living by farming.

Declining Status of Hired Farm Workers

In the decades since the passing of the frontier, the economic and social status of hired farm workers has steadily declined. With the specialization of production, the farmers' degree of dependence on hired labor has increased, particularly in the areas where seasonal farming operations have not been mechanized. Yet the tradition still lingers that the average farm laborer is only temporarily on the bottom rung of the agricultural ladder and that he will in due time either move up the ladder, through tenancy, into ownership or move out of the agricultural labor group into some other permanent occu-

pation or profession. Instead, through the sifting process of cityward migration and the decline in the operation of the agricultural ladder, an increasing proportion of those who make up the hired farm labor force has come to be those who are unable to move into other lines of employment.

This trend is due to a number of causes. Specialization in agricultural production, plus mechanization, have increased the demand for seasonal laborers, but these seasonal workers cannot find full-time employment in agriculture. Moreover, improved means of communication have made it possible for both farm and urban workers to know of alternative opportunities for employment, and improved means of transportation have made it possible for them to move from job to job. The migration of people out of the "Dust Bowl" during the early 1930's, the great movement of workers from farms to factories during the war, and the approaching exodus of people from Southern farms as the mechanization of cotton farming increases are only dramatic manifestations of the less obvious operation of the same trend. It is unfortunate that the relatively long-time operation of the trend has not been recognized.

To the extent that the factors causing the trend will accelerate, the status of many agricultural hired workers will continue to decline. They will do arduous labor for lower wages than industrial workers, have little protection through social legislation, and lack the advantages of home and community life, for their economic, social, and sometimes citizenship status is determined by their residual position in the labor market. At the present time the trend continues partly because its social significance is not recognized and partly the workers involved are neither organized nor vocal. Yet they constitute the most disadvantaged class in agriculture and so far have not received the welfare benefits that social legislation has provided for many others whose plight, though more obvious, is not as desperate as theirs.

Rising Levels and Standards of Living

As a result, or perhaps concomitant with other major trends in agriculture and rural life, there has been a general rise in the level of living of American farm operator families, both owners and tenants. Now as never before these operator families want to raise their level of living; they want up-to-date dwellings, home conveniences, more recreation, and opportunities to keep up with what is going on in the world. It takes money to do these things, and the fact that farm people have had more money than usual in recent years has caused them to make many improvements and plan for others

in the future. The families who do not yet have the improvements want them all the more when they see them at their neighbors' houses, while the families who do have them develop new desires for themselves. Thus the rises in the *levels* of living of farm operator families are contributing dynamically to further rises in their *standards* of living.

This rise in levels and standards of living among farm operator families is due not so much, as is generally thought, to the fact that farm people have become urbanized, for the levels and standards of living of farm people today are far above those of urban families a century ago and above those of many urban dwellers today. It is due rather to the fact that the farmers now have contact with the other segments of national and world culture, that farming like other business enterprises is in the market economy, and that science and invention have made their contributions to rural life as well as to urban life. As a result, farm people have been automatically stimulated to higher levels of consumption of both economic and social services.

One of the results of the higher levels and standards of living of farm people is that a steadily increasing percentage of their net annual income is used to maintain them. Furthermore, these higher levels of living compete with land purchases for the income of farm families far more strongly than they have in the past. There are those who criticize farm people for desiring and maintaining these high levels in the face of their waning possibilities of becoming farm owners. It is probably futile, however, to expect farm people now living in contact with other segments of society and participating more wholeheartedly in modern culture to be satisfied with the lower standards of living they had in earlier days, even though the result is that fewer and fewer of them will be owners of farms. The rise in levels of living has been a trend for decades, and there is little likelihood that the trend will be reversed.

Decreasing Rural-Urban Difference

As was pointed out above, rural and urban levels of living are becoming more alike not so much because rural people adopt urban methods and standards, but because farmers are becoming more closely identified with the price and market system and are in contact with many more cultural processes than they were in the past. Furthermore, many persons employed in industrial enterprises now live in the country areas, and many farm people engage in some urban employment. Even those engaged in full-time farming have an in-

creasing number of contacts with urban life. Farm people go to town more often than they did in the past, and now that improved roads and automobiles are available they go even more often, especially to the larger towns. Moreover, electric lights, telephones, newspapers, and radios have triumphed over the physical barriers that at one time separated urban and rural people. In the face of all these trends, it is inevitable that the practices, ideas, and attitudes of both farm and urban people should become more and more similar.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to separate rural and urban people by census definitions. Part-time farmers and rural-nonfarm residents make up an increasing proportion of the rural population, and the gradations between them and farmers who participate also in other occupations and enterprises are relatively continuous. This is not so important, however, as the fact that all these people live together as neighbors, attend the same churches, send their children to the same schools, and continually exert a mutual influence upon each other, all of which tends to lessen differences between them.

Changing Methods of Obtaining Security

Throughout the history of the world security has probably been more definitely assured to people engaged in agriculture than to those in any other broad occupation. Indeed, in self-sufficient agriculture a degree of economic security is almost automatic, except in cases of drought, floods, and similar catastrophes. This security, however, has quite universally been purchased by the sacrifice of both material and cultural levels of living. But now that agriculture has come quite fully into the commercial world and farm people are stimulated by the same cultural desires as others, they are experiencing insecurities that did not prevail in past generations. We have pointed out that to gain ownership of a farm is more difficult than it was in the past, while to operate a mechanized and commercialized farm is far more expensive and involves a great deal more risk than operating a self-sufficient farm. Furthermore, to these inexorable economic facts must be added an equally unyielding social or psychological fact: the higher standards of living of farm people make them feel insecure if they cannot have health, education, recreation, and welfare services that were not available to previous generations of farmers.

As farm people have moved out of what sociologists call primary group relationships into secondary group relationships, they have begun to seek the methods of security that are common in other

business enterprises and other segments of society. These methods consist chiefly of different types of insurance. Because of their relatively heavy financial investments they have for a long while insured their farm buildings, their crops and livestock, and to some extent, their lives. In some other countries farmers are included in national social security programs. In the United States there is a growing recognition that this is probably their only alternative if they are to have modern social services and modern health services, and to be assured at least to a minimum degree against the unpredictable losses that result from physical catastrophes and financial depressions over which they as individual farmers have no control.

Steady Decline in Primary Types of Association

There is probably no long-term trend that is more consistent and more significant than the relative decline of primary types of association in American rural life and the relative increase of secondary types of association. Farm neighborhoods and communities still exist in practically all parts of the country, and informal and semiformal visiting, which is almost a lost art in all other segments of society, is still very prevalent in rural areas. Nevertheless the great increase in market and other urban contacts, plus the transfer of many economic and social functions from local communities to larger areas of association and operation, have so greatly increased the farmer's secondary types of association that primary groups do not perform the role they once did in American rural life. For instance, the provision for and maintenance of schools and roads in rural areas were at one time almost completely the function of local neighborhood communities, but gradually these functions have been transferred to township, county, and sometimes state jurisdictions. Also, mutual aid social services, the care of the sick, the exchange of labor, and practically all recreation were once local neighborhood practices. They are still fairly prevalent in rural communities, but the establishment of specialized services, which are generally operated and administered by larger groups and sometimes by government jurisdiction, has shifted a considerable portion of these functions to semisecondary types of association.

Certainly this trend away from primary toward secondary types of association marks a sharp difference between American rural life and the rural life of peasant countries. While it has involved a loss of self-sufficiency in local neighborhoods and communities, and probably a loss also in the psychological self-sufficiency of rural personalities, at the same time there has been a gain in that the intelligence, and consequently the personalities, of farm people have

been broadened. Moreover, not all the assets of mutual aid are lost in this transfer. Where farmers adopt co-operative techniques and organizations to handle their larger economic and social associations they are able to function in semi-big business and large community groups, while at the same time they maintain their face-to-face associations in the neighborhood "locals" of their larger co-operative associations. There are many who believe that rural life is the last bulwark of mutual aid groups, but they recognize that the rapidity and consistency with which agriculture and rural life have come to participate in the "great society" may have destroyed mutual aid attitudes more rapidly than was necessary, and that everything possible should be done to preserve these primary forms of association. Whether or not they are correct in their beliefs, there is no doubt that American rural society is becoming relatively more secular and relatively less a folk culture.

Within the fourteen major trends that have been discussed in this chapter there are many minor trends or components of trends that others might designate as major trends. In any event, all of those listed are interrelated with others. They are also related to some major economic trends which it is not primarily the role of the sociologist to analyze. It should be recognised, of course, that other sociologists will not agree that the fourteen trends, discussed here, are the major trends in American rural life. It is believed, however, that they do point to some significant directions of change and that each has been fairly well documented in the preceding chapters of this book.

TECHNIQUES OF RURAL CHANGE*

By

N. L. SIMS

Countrymen everywhere in the world are traditionally adverse to change. The American farmer is true to type; he is notoriously conservative. As one has said, he "can go along as he always has and as his father did before him and still keep going." Howbeit, he is much less stagnant than the average Old World peasant, tho far more so than the city dwelling American. He has been resistant to innovating ways, reluctant to adopt scientific methods, and opposed to "new fangled things" in general. He has not been kindly disposed toward political and social experiments, for he votes down most reform measures having to do with improvement in education, sanitation, health, government, taxation and labor conditions. In politics he is generally a standpatter; in religion an unchanging "fundamentalist"; and in business matters an overcautious enterpriser.

The average urbanite, in contrast, is inclined to be radical. He seeks the new in business, proposes political and social improvement, and prizes whatever is "modern" and "up-to-date".

The specific causes of this difference between the cityman and the countryman are not far to seek. First of all, the environments of the two are different. One dwells in a man-made world that is never finished; the other in the world of nature, whose ways are established. The average countryman is a property-owner with his possession at stake, whereas the average city man is a wage earner with nothing to lose but everything to gain. If a capitalist, the urbanite can more readily readjust himself if alteration comes than can the landowner and crop-grower. Above all, the people of the city are younger in years and so more pliable, are of many social and cultural elements, are followers of a greater variety of ways of getting a living. Hence, stimulation plays upon them, while stagnation surrounds the countryman.

Methods of Change

Although the traditions of rural life do not favour change, the

*Elements of Rural Sociology by N. L. Sims, pp. 663-674, copyrighted in 1946, Thomas Y. Crowell Company.

country is by no means changeless. On the contrary, American rural society is fairly progressive compared with rural society in other parts of the world. The American farmer is probably less bound by habit, less wedded to the old, less opposed to social reform than is the farming class of any other country with the exception of Denmark. The methods of effecting change in rural society are so vital that they must be carefully analyzed.

1. *The persuasive method.* This is the one most in vogue in all effort toward reform in country and city alike. It proceeds upon the assumption that the communication of ideas will lead to their performance. Back of this assumption lies a more fundamental one, which holds that people are rationally motivated. Hence the widespread resort to preaching and to the appeal of ideas. But this method has been greatly overrated and overworked. Judged by results, it is of doubtful value. For men in general are not primarily rational. Their essential conservatism argues as much, for the rational are normally radical. James Harvey Robinson attempts to show that only one-fourth part of the human mind is predisposed to change. The civilized man's consciousness rests back on the animal consciousness, the child consciousness, and the savage consciousness. The animal mind, with its instincts, its curiosity and impulse to fumble and grope; the child mind, with its prejudices and misapprehensions and struggles against the censorship of elders; the savage mind, which was man's till the last 5,000 years, with its anthromorphic and conservative ways, are all three still playing a part in the civilized mind, which is critical, speculative, skeptical, and originative. The three former minds that we possess, or that most men do, generally dominate the fourth, or civilized mind. For this reason, most all the world is very conservative. It conforms, it changeth not, it does not venture, but returns under the pull of instincts to its old and customary ways where it is sure.

The countryman, living in a *milieu* that does not stimulate the civilized part of the mind overmuch, answers less, if anything, to the rational appeal than does the average city person. The reformer's message falls mostly upon deaf ears. Only the few are able to harken and to take heed.

This basic condition is often modified, however, by factors favourable to the rational appeal. If there be many youth, the persuasive method will meet with much more success than otherwise; for youth responds to ideas as age does not. If, again, the people [illegible] largely pioneers, there will be a similar response; for the [illegible]

also is a man of change, else he would not have pioneered. He is receptive to ideals and acts upon them as few others do. Thus, the frontier of America has ever been the home of our most vigorous political and social idealism. The West and the Northwest are its chief abiding places today. There the farmer has been persuaded by reform programs, by the tenets of democracy, by the cooperative movement, and by the gospel of progress. Upon these pioneering and youthful peoples the persuasion that has left other rural sections largely cold, unmoved, and barren has fallen as seed to spring up in abundant fruitage. The Granger movement, Greenbackism, Populism, Free Silver, the Nonpartisan League, and the La Follette movement are the major causes in which response has been manifested. Still again, the persuasive method is more effective when applied to the primary mores than to the secondary. Rational variation may be secured in the things that have to do with getting a living when people cannot be moved with reference to those of less vital import. Says Keller: "It is not hard to demonstrate to an ignorant person in this country that he should learn to read and write; he can see that by living in this society. Similarly for his interest is it that he shall use the English language. Tests lie all about him and are immediate and decisive. But try to persuade him by abstract argument to give up the vendetta, to renounce anarchistic leanings, or to change his religion and you fail. There are no immediate and decisive tests at hand. You cannot demonstrate that interest will be subserved by change; you cannot even secure visualization of evil consequences..The more nearly custom (the folkways) represents direct reaction on environment in the actual struggle for material aids to existence, the more rational a test does it undergo, and conversely, the more derived the societal forms, the more clearly do they fall under the tests of tradition rather than reason"

"You can persuade a savage of the inadequacy of his stone hatchet long before he can be made to see that his family system is capable of being superseded by one yielding better satisfaction to his interests." The American farmer has been somewhat influenced by the sort of ideas that would show how two ears of corn might be made to grow where one grew before but in most other things he has remained essentially unmoved.

Not only does the persuasive method often miss the mark, but, what is worse, it may accomplish harm. It may agitate only the emotions and educate not at all. Says Sumner of agitation: "Every impulse given to the masses is, in its nature, spasmodic and tran-

sitory. No systematic enterprise to enlighten the masses can be carried out. Campaigns of education contain a fallacy. Education takes time. It cannot be treated as subsidiary for a lifetime and then be made the chief business for six months with the desired results. A campaign of education is undemocratic. It implies that some one is teacher and somebody else pupil. It can only result in the elucidation of popular interests and the firmer establishment of popular prejudice. On the other hand, an agitation which appeals skillfully to pet notions and to latent fanaticism may stampede the masses. The Middle Ages furnished a number of cases. The Mahdis, who have arisen in Mohammedan Africa, and other Moslem prophets have produced wonderful phenomena of this kind. The silver agitation was begun in 1878 by a systematic effort of three or four newspapers in the Middle West addressed to currency notions which the Greenback proposition had popularized. What is the limit to the possibilities of fanaticism and frenzy which might be produced in any society by agitation skillfully addressed to the fallacies and passions of the masses? The answer lies in the mores, which determine the degree of reserved common sense, and the habit of observing measures and methods, to which the masses have been accustomed. It follows that popular agitation is a desperate and doubtful method. The masses, as the great popular jury which, at last, by adoption or rejection, decides the fate of all proposed changes in the mores, need stability and moderation. Popular agitation introduces into the masses initiative and creative functions which destroy its judgment and call for quite other qualities."

2. *The demonstration method.* Where preaching and efforts of persuasion have failed to get results, another method has been resorted to with singular success. The method is that of visual demonstration. It is estimated that about one in seven adults can reason from principle to practice or can be influenced by lectures, reports and bulletins. But four out of five adults will learn new practices only by seeing them performed. Thus with about 86 per cent of the people amenable to change chiefly by this method, it becomes of first-rate importance. It has been extensively applied, particularly in the alteration of the subsistence mores. Results obtained by it have been nothing short of revolutionary.

This method is distinctly an American invention in its application to rural life. It grew out of the efforts of the agricultural experiment stations to get farmers to adopt the results of scientific experimentation. Bulletins and institute lectures were without much effect until someone observed that experiments conducted on

farms were imitated by the farmers of the neighborhood. Hence, by means of these cooperative projects, in which the stations and actual farmers took part, the value of the demonstrative method became apparent.

This method was given large vogue thru the efforts of Doctor Seaman A. Knapp, an agent of the Department of Agriculture in the South. He began to employ it in Texas and Louisiana in an effort to curb the ravages of the bollweevil. From that small beginning a nation-wide movement and organization built upon the idea gave the cooperative agricultural extension work, carried on jointly by federal and state governments. The County Agricultural Agent, the Home Demonstration Agent and the Boys' and Girls' Club work are its main products and lines of endeavor. The County Agent is engaged in some 3,075 counties, conducting and supervising farm demonstrations covering practically every phase of the business of farming.

The Home Demonstration agents are at work in three-fifths of the counties. They are engaged in showing farm women and girls better ways of home making. The Boys' and Girls' Club work is giving vocational training and cultural education by the same general methods to the youth of the country. It centers attention not only on some important phase of agriculture or home life in each community, but it seeks also to develop social qualities, leadership, and the general personality of country youth. In 1938 one-fifth of the farm boys and girls 10 to 20 years of age were being instructed.

This demonstration method has been found quite as effective when applied in spheres other than that of agriculture or home making. In matters of health and sanitation it has proved exceedingly valuable.

3. *The morphological method.* By this is meant the effort to produce change in social habits by altering the social structure, i.e. by means of organization. Rural reformers have generally assumed that they could do it in this way. Hence, excellent schemes have been drawn up and comprehensive social machinery devised for carrying them into effect. Not infrequently such machinery is actually set up in a community in the hope that it will run. Sometimes it does run, but in the vast majority of cases it does not run for long and proves to be so much motionless enginery, impotent to accomplish any work. Thus, when an attempt is made in this way to mobilize a rural community to some new ends and for some new endeavor, all that usually comes of the undertaking is the life-

less machinery itself. The life cycle of rural organizations is definite and short. *Stimulation,* usually by some agency from outside the local community, is given in behalf of a specific interest. The *organization* is formed by electing officers, enrolling members, adopting a constitution, and outlining a program of action. The newly formed association attempts to *carry on* by itself and without the support of the original promoters. It meets with *difficulties* in fulfilling its aims, which probably prove to be beyond reach. Factions develop, indifference creeps in, conflicts with other local interests and institutions arise, and the organization *declines* and dies.

Unless the spirit of community is present, i.e., a self-conscious unity of people who feel a need for joint action, no program of organization is likely to succeed. Only in exceptional cases will the movement for organization itself give rise to this spirit of community. Where it does so, the method of course justifies itself. Where it does not and where there was no real community to begin with, it proves futile.

4. *Deterministic change.* The most profound and far-reaching change in society takes place of itself—mechanically. It springs from several sources. One source is the vicissitudes of nature, such as floods, droughts, storms, plagues, pests, and the extremes of climatic cycles. The periodic recurrence of drought in the swing of the climatic cycle over sections of the West has been responsible for the migration of rural people in and out of that region. It has influenced political and economic movements also. Again, the ravages of the boll-weevil in the South have caused numerous readjustments in the afflicted areas and resulted in extensive population shiftings.

Another source is more directly social, such as crises, war, revolutionizing invention, and significant discovery. These set going chains of consequences which effect permanent alteration. The invention of the cotton gin, reaping machinery, the tractor and the automobile are instances in point. Rural institutions and the habits of farmers are being changed by these devices.

A third source of alteration is found in the incidental consequences of purposive action. Much that happens is unlooked for, unplanned, and fortuitous. It transpires as the by-product of conscious endeavor. Often it turns out to be the main product instead of the one that was sought. The Farm Bureau movement, for example, was designed by the government for educational purposes. Once started, however, in parts of the country it became a powerful economic agency engaged in business cooperation. It has

also developed political tendencies and rallied the farmers of the nation to bring pressure upon Congress to get desirable legislation. It was largely responsible for the Farm Bloc in the Sixty-seventh and Sixty-eighth Congress.

Unintended changes come about in still another way. When the subsistence mores undergo transformation, as Keller has shown, the secondary mores tend to alter in conformity with them, i.e., the secondary will "consist" with the primary. This is illustrated with respect to the church. When the self-sufficient agricultural economy prevailed and farm stuff was produced for home consumption instead of for market, money was scarce and little used by the American farmer. The church was built and the minister sustained by contributions of work and produce. Religion was supported on donations. But with the development of commercial farming and the sale of produce for money, the business of agriculture shifted to a new basis. In keeping, the attitude toward the church has undergone a general change. The church support has become monetary and the obligation to render personal service in its behalf has given place to the practice of hiring things done for it.

5. *The contact method.* It is generally recognized that one of the most effective means of social change is found in contact of cultures—where peoples of different cultures come in touch with one another, cross-fertilization takes place. Perhaps nothing has been more conducive to progress.

In a certain sense this factor is operative with reference to rural society. City culture and rural culture have for most of our history been spheres apart. The farmer has lived in a stagnant world remote from the dynamic centers of urban life. He has been relatively unstimulated and uninfluenced by them. Not that urban and rural cultures have not always had a good deal in common in this country, but that what they have not had in common had failed to run up against its opposite in fruitful contact. But of late unparalleled agencies of communication and frequent contact have brought city and country together as never before. The result is, that wherever this has happened, country life has been greatly stimulated. Rapid urbanization has taken place.

One important consequence of contact between city and country is seen in the rise of cooperation. Individualism has been undermined by the knowledge of urban cooperation. It has begun to give way because it is unprofitable. Professor J. M. Williams has

said: 'The cooperative attitude which promises to transform rural life developed in other vocations before farming. Rural leaders saw business men organizing to raise prices and increase their profits; saw workingmen organizing to raise their wages. They used these arguments with the rank and file of still individualistic farmers."

The city class has been looked up to as superior, and its ways have been imitated. In matters of dress, recreation, moral code, and standard of living this is much in evidence.

6. *The compulsory method.* This is the method of law and government. It is also the method of social pressure where there is no legal sanction or governmental backing. Some change is wrought this way. A positive and aggressive faction may coerce the rest into altering their ways. The Empress Dowager of China issued an edict ending the opium trade. The European dictators have forced the collectivization of agriculture, altered the system of land holding, and compelled the acceptance of numerous other changes. During the Great War social pressure compelled people to support war charities, join organizations, buy bonds, and restrict food consumption. To rural America along with the rest, coercive measures were applied. Among other things, production was made compulsory, prices were fixed, the disposal of foodstuffs prescribed and the time of labor regulated by law. Of late the A.A.A., the Soil Conservation Acts and the Farm Security Administration have contained elements of compulsion. The last is exerting much pressure on educational agencies to support its program. Thus old habits and beliefs are being broken down and new ways established in the country.

So long as authority stands guard, its bidding is done, but when it relaxes its vigilance or goes off duty people tend to slip back into their old ways. The farmer turned his back upon social service organization such as the Red Cross, his openhandedness ceased, and he went on a strike against the daylight saving laws after the World War. Very little, if any, permanent change was effected by the wartime compulsion.

Nevertheless some enduring change may be brought about by this method, although force must be long applied to get permanent results. Perhaps more is accomplished when its objects are negative instead of positive. It works better as a restrictive than as a constructive agency. Otherwise governments might easily bring about all sorts of changes. But as it is, they can do but few things with any degree of success under a democratic system.

7. *The genetic method.* This method begins with the simplest elements of human nature and social behavior, i.e. reflexes, habits and customs, and out of them proceeds to develop new and more complex habits and associational modes.

Where all other methods fail, this one can be relied upon to get results if any persuasive method can. In proceeding to manipulate, the principle of preferential motives may be brought to bear. This principle indicates that men naturally act on a scale of behavior which runs from the basis of least cost and most satisfaction in effort to ever increasing cost and more enduring, if not greater, satisfactions.

I have elsewhere formulated this principle as the *Law of Rural Socialization.* This law is expressed as follows: "Cooperation in rural neighborhoods has its genesis in and development thru those forms of association which, beginning on the basis of least cost, gradually rise thru planes of increasing cost to the stage of greatest cost in effort demanded, and which give at the same time ever increasing and more enduring benefits and satisfaction to the group."

This law of conduct is of particular significance in relation to rural change. By following it the individualistic, non-cooperating country folk may be socialized and organized. Latent gregariousness can be aroused and the play impulse utilized to get simple united action; under the stimulus of such action the work incentive can be brought forward and made to yield effective cooperation. And out of the socialized capital thus accumulated, the more difficult economic and cultural enterprises that have to do with community welfare may at length be ventured upon and realized.

Many instances could be cited where communities have been transformed substantially by this method. The achievement of Mrs. Harvey in the Porter school district of Missouri is a case in point. Evelyn Dewey's report gives us the facts somewhat as follows: Mrs. Harvey did not come to Porter with any specific and obvious program for effecting reforms in either ways of living or agricultural methods. Nor did she set about at once to impose ready-made organizations upon the community. Such tactics could only have aroused resentment and defeated her ends. Instead, she simply gave the families—hitherto isolated and self-centered on their farms—opportunities of becoming acquainted; became herself their personal friend and trusted advisor, and as such suggested the possibilities in their environment and broadened their social outlook. Thus little by little she trained them into social activity, not by obviously

making over the community, but by merely "loosening forces that resulted in organization and movements."

8. *The educational method.* In several of the methods already mentioned the educational factor is present; but what we have in mind here is education thru the schools. Formal education ought to be the most effective means of social change. Thru the schools as molders of childhood, new and better ways ought to be achieved by each succeeding generation. If they are not to any great degree, the fault lies in what the schools teach. Confessedly they are concerned chiefly with teaching the culture of the past rather than with finding out any new things. The past tends to be idealized and the present to be perpetuated by the schools.

The rural schools are least of any the mediators of change. Such influence as they have exerted in this direction has been preponderantly adverse to rural society. It has tended to turn the footsteps of youth cityward. It has thus acted as a disturbing agency indeed, but not primarily for the advantage of the school community. Rightly directed, however, the rural school may be the most effective and dependable agency of regular and systematic change. It is at the bottom of the problem of a more adequate civilization for the country, for with the childhood and youth of today rests the trend of civilization tomorrow.

ELEMENTS IN RURAL WELFARE*

FAO

A. ELEMENTS IN RURAL WELFARE

HEALTH	*As expressed in or affected by:*
1. Demographic conditions	(a) Expectation of life (b) Conditions of reproduction (As revealed by birth rates, mortality rates, age composition, population growth, etc.)
2. State of physical health	(a) Incidence of diseases and infirmities (including malnutrition and deficiency diseases)
3. State of mental health	(a) Incidence of mental diseases
LEVELS OF INCOME AND CONSUMPTION	
1. Income	(a) Amount (b) Stability (c) Distribution
2. Material standards of consumption (i) Diet	(a) Quantity, composition, and regularity of food consumption (b) Feeding of infants
(ii) Housing	(a) Adequacy of space, ventilation, etc. (b) Design, construction, and state of repair (c) Facilities: water supply and sanitation; food conservation; lighting, cooking, etc.
(iii) Other	(a) Home furnishing and equipment (b) Clothing (c) Other (Expenditure on transport, education, recreation, etc.)
3. Savings	
CONDITIONS OF WORK	(a) General (Intensity, variety, length, and regularity of work; unemployment and underemployment; holidays; other) (b) Working relations, e.g., as between farmer and wage earner, landlord and tenant.

*Essentials of Rural Welfare, FAO, pp. 29-43, .

	(Opportunities for collective action, degree of exploitation, participation in management or conduct of farm enterprise, etc.)
LITERACY AND SKILLS	(a) Extent and incidence of literacy (b) Nature and incidence of skills (Covering not only economic skills but opportunities for aesthetic or other forms of expression)
SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT	*As expressed in or affected by:* (a) Security of person and property (b) Religious or communal strife and economic, social, and political unrest
INDIVIDUAL SECURITY	
1. Security of person	(a) Natural phenomena (b) Communal strife and economic, social, and political unrest (c) Custom, the law, and its administration
2. Security of income	*As affected by the above and by:* (a) Production and market changes (b) Tenure and debt (c) Conditions of employment
3. Security of property	As affected by the above
4. Emotional security	*As affected by the above and by:* (a) Religious, mythical, and other elements of culture (b) Participation in community
BELIEFS, CUSTOMS, AND STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR	*As expressed in or affected by:* (a) Religion and folklore, taboos and sanctions, morals, aesthetics (b) Sex relations: general; marriage; divorce; position of women; position of children (c) Family, clan, tribal, village, and other group relationships
B. DETERMINANTS (INCLUDING FACILITIES)	
ECONOMIC CONDITIONS: PRODUCTION	
1. Agricultural production	(a) Soil fertility, climate (Natural conditions; irrigation; drainage and other permanent land improvements; soil exhaustion, erosion, and denudation)

(b) Crops and livestock
(Types; diversification; yield per hectare and per caput)
(c) Size of farms
(d) Rights to common and forest
(e) Tenure
(Occupying ownership; cash and share tenancy; collective and co-operative farming; security of tenure; landlord-tenant relations; absentee landlordism and factor-intermediaries, etc.; nature of rental agreements; living standards, debt, etc. in relation to tenure; means of acquiring land; land values, etc.)
(f) Farm organization
(Layout, fragmentation; waste-land, etc.; buildings)
(g) Material aids
(Power, tools, and implements; fertilizers and other requisites; quality of seed and livestock)
(h) Techniques
(Stage of advancement; traditional influences; susceptibility to improvement)
(i) Workers and working conditions
(Nature of labor force, age and sex composition of workers; intensity and regularity of work; knowledge and skill; division of labor; other aspects of organization of labor)

2. Supplementary occupations

(a) In agriculture
(b) In home industries
(Nature; relative importance as source of income; integration with farming operations)
(c) Other

3. Markets and marketing

(a) Nature of markets
(Whether local, national, or world; location and character of market centers; susceptibility to price fluctuations; extent of barter)
(b) Market facilities and procedures
(Storage on farms, at terminals, etc.; assembling; processing, transport methods; weights and measures, grading, etc.; wastage)

	(c) Market relationships (Intermediaries; collective organizations; bargaining strength; degree of exploitation)
	(d) Market prices and costs (Process of price formation; price fluctuations and price relationships; spread and distribution of costs)
4. Transport and communication (as affecting economic efficiency)	(a) Roads and bridges, railways and waterways (Main systems, secondary systems, rural systems; condition; continuity in use; suitability and adequacy)
	(b) Means of locomotion (Human porterage; type, number and suitability of vehicles; public transport)
	(c) Means of communication (Newspapers and magazines; telephone, radio, postal, telegraph, etc.; market reports)
5. Credit	(a) Facilities (Moneylenders; traders; banks; government; co-operative societies)
	(b) Conditions (Purpose of loans; length; interest and other charges; risks and security; other)
6. Other ancillary services	(a) Purchasing facilities (Village shops; itinerant traders; markets and fairs; consumer co-operatives; urban shops and mail-order houses)
	(b) Other local services (Blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors, other craftsmen or artisans; garages; processing enterprises)
DIVISION OF THE PRODUCT	
1. Proportionate consumption	(a) In kind
	(b) Marketed
	(c) Exchanged
2. Allocation of farm income (Proportionate disrtibution, methods, and effects)	(a) Taxes (Subjects; objects; incidence; taxing authorities; bases and methods of assessment; economy, equity, and certainty; expenditure of tax funds)

(b) Rent
(Money or kind; bases of assessment; time and method of levying; relation to debt and security)
(c) Servicing of debt
(Interest and other charges; time and conditions of payment)
(d) Marketing costs and transport
(Amount, bases of charges; time and condition of payment, etc.)
(e) Labor costs
(In money or in kind; methods of fixation; times and methods of payment)
(f) Family expenditure and savings

3. Position of labor

(a) Composition of labor force
(Family, neighbors, landless laborers, etc.; women and children; class, caste, or racial composition; casual, part-time, permanent; migrant)
(b) Occupational distribution and mobility
(Conditions determining occupapational distribution—caste, religion, race, etc.; occupational mobility, including opportunities for improvement; geographical mobility)
(c) Wages
(Amount in cash and kind; basis of wage determination; systems of wage payment; security of payment; influences of class, caste, race, or custom)
(d) Conditions of employment
(Hours of work, holidays; security of employment; freedom of movement and freedom of contract; debt as a factor; health, housing, sanitation, education, social security, etc.)
(e) Prospects of obtaining land
(f) Organization
(General nature of labor market; freedom of, or impediments to, association; basis and form of association; labor unrest, causes and manifestations; employer-employee relations generally)

4. Debt and investment

(a) Value of investment
(Amount of investment—total, annual; source; objects)

	(b) Debt (Amount; purposes for which incurred—misfortune, ceremonial or other consumption expenditure, current production, improvements; conditions under which incurred)
5. Inheritance	(a) Amount (b) Law and custom (Nature and effects) (c) Inheritance of obligations (Nature, causes, and effects)
COMMUNITY AMENITIES	
1. Transport and communication (considered from point of view of social relationships)	(a) Transport (Distance to other villages and market towns; total length and condition of roads, waterways, railways, and other facilities; adequacy of public transport systems; kind and number of private vehicles)
	(b) Communication (Markets and fairs; postal and telegraph facilities; telephones; radios; newspapers; other)
2. Other (material)	(a) Water supply (b) Sanitation (c) Lighting (d) Community buildings
3. Health	(Levels of nutrition; water supply, housing, etc.; nature and organization of public health and sanitation services; number and training of doctors, dentists, nurses, midwives, dispensers; hospitals and clinics; control and preventive measures and their enforcement; health insurance and other facilities; geographical distribution of facilities in relation to population; finance and administration)
4. Education	(a) Elementary and secondary (1) General—Objectives, attitude towards, extent to which facilities are used by class, sex, age groups; regularity of attendance; impediments to use; suitability of and possibilities for higher education

(2) Types—Formal, informal; curricular, extra-curricular, technical, vocational
(3) Facilities—Buildings, equipment, transport; scholarships or other forms of assistance
(4) Teachers—Number, sex; how and from where recruited; type and number of facilities for training
(5) Expenditures and administration—Per caput expenditure at different grades; method of finance; scale and method of payment of teachers; system of control, inspection, and administration

(b) Higher education and research
As above, where appropriate, and: Standards of requirements for entrance and graduation; nature and extent of agricultural training and research; number and methods of placement of graduates in agricultural services; relation of institutions to extension, adult education, training of farmers, transmission of research results.

(c) Adult education
As above, where appropriate, in relation to:
(1) Extension
(2) Vocational
(3) Recreational
(4) Development of aesthetic and other forms of expression or appreciation
(5) Other

5. Recreation

(a) Informal
(Extent of and occasions for leisure use; types and frequency of sports, pastimes, feasts, festivals, etc.; significance of fairs, markets, intercommunal ceremonies, etc.)

(b) Formal or commercial
(Organized sports, pastimes, etc.; clubs and associations—nature and degree of participation; community centers; cinemas, travel-

	ing shows, and other commercial forms)
6. Social security	(Nature of needs and provision for them; place of family, clan, village, secret society, religious group; public provision--coverage, finance, conditions, administration)
SOCIAL STRUCTURE	
1. Social arrangements	(a) Kin and neighborhood groups (Stratification or grouping due to family, clan, or tribe; neighborhood or village; counties, regions, etc.; mobility between strata or groups; nature and extent of strains or conflicts)
	(b) Social classes (Due to the above and to caste, race, religion, secret society, economic status, etc.; mobility; nature and extent of strains and conflicts)
	(c) Spontaneous or informal groups or communal associations (Types as above; interests or activities, e.g., relief, protection, ceremonies, festivals, etc.; farming, roadmaking, or other communal needs)
	(d) Formal institutions (For economic, educational, religious, recreational, or other purposes, e.g., co-operative societies, trade unions, farmers' organizations, churches, temples, etc.)
2. Government	(a) Local government
	(1) Forms and levels (village, county, province, etc.)
	(2) Nature of activities
	(3) Extent and nature of participation by population (systems of voting and election)
	(4) Local finance (local revenues; how raised; how and for what expended; how controlled)
	(5) Rural leadership (basis of selection; nature; how exercised; how effective)
	(b) Central government
	(1) Participation in local problems (Nature, extent, and methods;

number, functions, and method of appointment of central government officials)

(2) Participation of local population in central government (degree and purposes; method—direct or indirect; system of voting and election)

(3) Finance (methods of raising; objects and methods of expenditure; methods of administration)

C. INDICATORS (CAPABLE OF QUANTITATIVE EXPRESSION)

PERSONAL CONDITIONS

Element	*Indicators of Element*	*Indicators of determinants (including Facilities)*
1. Health	(a) Expectation of life	(1) Numbers of doctors, dentists, nurses, etc., per 1,000 of population
	(b) Birth rates, death rates, age composition, population growth (net production rates)	(2) Number of hospitals, hospital beds, clinics, etc., per 1,000 population
	(c) Incidence of disease (i) Physical (including malnutrition and deficiency diseases) (ii) Mental	(3) Per caput expenditure on health (4) Calories, grams of protein, units of other constituents in diet, and other means of assessing nutritional status
2. Education	(a) Percentage of literacy	(1) Number of schools, colleges, etc.
	(b) Enrollment in schools (i) Number by age groups (ii) Regularity of attendance (iii) Average length of attendance	(2) Number of teachers, at each grade, and number of workers in extension and adult education (3) Number of research workers classified in categories (4) Number of books, periodicals, newspapers published

Element	*Indicators of Element*	*Indicators of determinants (including Facilities)*
	(c) Numbers trained and length of training in technical skills	(5) Number of libraries, subscribers to libraries, and books borrowed
	(d) Numbers participating in adult education	(6) Number of radio sets
	(e) Number of subscribers to newspapers and periodicals	(7) Per caput expenditure on education of each grade or type
3. Conditions of work	(a) Number of workers (i) Employers and employees (ii) Number under crop-sharing agreements	(1) Number of trade unions and employer associations (2) Numbers in trade unions and employer associations (3) Number of collective agreements
	(b) Hours of work (c) Number of holidays (d) Rates of wages and other earnings (e) Number of work stoppages, workers affected, and duration of stoppages	(4) Terms of agreements affecting the sharing of the product
4. Social adjustment	(a) Number of delinquents	(1) Number of magistrates (2) Number of social workers (3) Penal institutions (i) Number and capacity (ii) Number of inmates (4) Reformatory institutions (i) Number and capacity (ii) Number of inmates (5) Per caput expenditure on: (i) Administration of law and justice. (ii) Remedial measures
5. Security of the Individual	Natural hazards: (a) Numbers affected by flood and famine	(1) Capital and maintenance expenditure on preventive works
	Economic hazards: (b) Fluctuations in income Average income	(1) Expenditures on price stabilization policies
	(c) Changes in property ownership	(2) Expenditure on relief

Element	*Indicators of Element*	*Indicators of determinants (including Facilities)*
	(i) Changes in debt (ii) Number and value of foreclosed and abandoned farms (iii) Changes in numbers of occupying owners and tenants	(3) Number and volume of business of credit institutious (4) Rates of interest (5) Number of voluntary, arbitrated, or imposed adjustments
	Social and other psychological hazards: (d) Number of delinquents (e) Marriage and divorce rates	(As Under 4: Social Adjustment)
	(f) Incidence of mental disease	(As under 1: Health)

LEVELS OF PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION: MATERIAL

A. QUANTITY

1. Real income: General	(a) National income (b) Average per caput real income (i) Total (ii) Amount from farming and subsidiary occupations (c) Relative prices of: (i) Farm products (ii) Requisites and consumer goods and services (d) Volume and value of production per caput and per hectare (e) Volume and value of non-farming production, total and per caput	(1) Area under cultivation (2) Size of farms (3) Numbers of livestock (4) Volume of capital, total and per caput (i) All (ii) Farming (iii) Industry, transport, etc. (iv) Other (5) Population of working age, total and proportion to total population (6) Occupational distribution (7) Utilization of labor: days worked (8) Number and types of credit agencies or intermediaries (9) Volume of credit classified according to agencies or intermediaries (10) Volume of credit classified according to: (i) Purpose (ii) Length

Element	*Indicators of Element*	*Indicators of determinants (including Facilities)*
		(11) Rates of interest classified according to: (i) Purpose (ii) Agency or intermediary Marketing: (12) Costs of marketing (13) Number of co-operative societies Transport: (14) Costs of transport (See also Social Amenities—1 below)
2. General consumer goods	(a) Average expenditure per caput (b) Distribution of expenditures e.g., (i) Food (ii) other consumer goods (iii) Fuel and shelter (iv) Educational, medical, and other services (v) Savings (vi) Other (c) Units of consumption of selected items e.g., yards of cloth	(As under 1: Real income)
3. Nutrition	(a) Calories, grams of protein, and units of other constituents (b) Numbers suffering from malnutrition and deficiency diseases	(1) Supplies of various foodstuffs (2) Numbers engaged in nutritional services
4. Housing	(a) Number of housing units in relation to population (b) Average number of occupants per dwelling and per room (c) Numbers of houses made of various materials (d) Floor space and cubic feet of air space (e) Number with running water, etc. (f) Number with open and closed drains, etc.	(1) Supplies of building materials (2) Numberr of building craftsmen (3) Costs of building

Element	*Indicators of Element*	*Indicators of determinants (including Facilities)*
B. DISTRIBUTION		
1. Relative amounts of real income going to different groups or classes	(a) Population classified into income groups (b) Distribution of expenditures in various items according to groups (see also *Levels of production and consumption*—2(b)) (c) per caput expenditure on selected items according to income groups e.g., food, textiles, fuel and shelter, education, medical care	(1) Occupational distribution (2) Numbers classified according to tenure (3) Size of farms according to tenure (4) Proportion of rent to gross yield (5) Distribution of market income over farm expenses (labor, interest, taxes, etc.) market costs, transport charges
SOCIAL AMENITIES (OTHER THAN THOSE ALREADY COVERED)		
1. Transport	(a) Density of population	(1) Length of roads, railways, waterways per 1,000 population
	(b) Number of passengers and ton-miles of goods for each type of transport (e.g., as in Column 3)	(2) Square kilometers of area per kilometer of roads, railways, and waterways (3) Number of motor vehicles (4) Number of other wheeled vehicles (5) Number of locomotives, passenger cars, and freight cars (6) Number and tonnage of vessels on waterways (7) Number of people engaged in transport services
2. Communications	(a) Number of radios, newspaper and periodical subscribers, and telephones (b) Volume of postal business (c) Number of markets and fairs; frequency	(1) Number of separate newspapers and periodicals published; frequency (2) Number of radio stations (3) Number of post offices (4) Cost of newspapers and periodicals, telephone services, radio licences, postal services (5) Distances between markets

Element	*Indicators of Element*	*Indicators of determinants (including Facilities)*
3. Other: Water supply; sanitation; lighting	(a) Number of houses using running water; wells; streams, etc. (b) Number of homes with flush toilets; open privies; other; septic tanks; connected with public sewerage (c) Number of houses using electric lights, gas, oil (d) Electric power used (i) In industry (ii) On farms	(1) Storage and daily capacity of reservoirs and tanks (2) Cost of water supply to consumers (3) Number of electric power plants; power capacity; power output
SOCIAL ORGANIZATION		
1. Kinship		(a) Sex composition (b) Age composition (c) "Race" composition (d) Number and size of families (e) Number and size of clans
2. Religion and caste		(a) Number of sects and number of adherents (b) Number of priests, ministers, etc. (c) Number of churches and temples (d) Value of property and income of sects (e) Number and membership of castes
3. Social and cultural other than the above		(a) Number of clubs and societies (b) Membership
4. Economic		(a) Value of property and income (b) Occupational distribution according to age, sex, "race", caste, etc. (c) Co-operative societies (i) Number (ii) Membership (iii) Volume of business

	(d) Number and membership of farmers' unions or associations
	(e) Number and membership of workers' unions
	(f) Number and membership of other groups to further economic interests
5. Political	*In respect of both local and national government*:
	(a) Number having franchise
	(b) Number voting
	(c) Number and membership of political parties
	(d) Number of public officials
	(e) Public revenue and expenditures:
	(i) Total
	(ii) Per caput
	Classified according to source of revenue and distribution of expenditure

RURAL ORGANIZATION AS A FIELD OF RESEARCH*

(By J. D. Black and C. C. Zimmerman)

Rural organization as here interpreted takes the individual farms and farm and village families as given; also such business units as banks, stores, grain elevators and other buyers of farm products; also such institutions as local governments, schools and churches—and proceeds to consider their aggregation and association into various types of units of organizations, such as, on the one hand, villages, towns and cities and their trade or service areas, and on the other hand, horizontal similar-interest groups such as clubs, debating societies, parent-teacher associations, farm bureau units and co-operatives.

In the first type of organization, the individual units that are associated are held together because they serve one another and depend upon each other largely for their existence—like the farmer and the merchant, and the banker and the merchant. Each is part of a whole scheme of division of labour and exchange of products and services. Such units of organization are commonly referred to these days as *ecological.* No formal organizations hold together the parties to such arrangements, no membership rosters and no articles of agreement; but they are nevertheless firmly bound together, more firmly than by any membership compact they might draw up.

The other type of organization arises when a group of individuals of the same class or type—farms, farm families, or farm boys or girls—having a certain interest or purpose in common, join together in order to realize this purpose, or to realize it more completely or with less effort. Such joining of effort may be purely informal throughout, an almost unconscious following of some leadership; or it may become formalized into a club or association of some kind with by-laws and elected officers.

The research projects discussed later in Group A deal with ecological types of organization; those in Group B with special-interest types of organization.

It follows from the foregoing that the internal organization problems of farm and family enterprises, of business enterprises, and of such institutions as local government, the schools and the church,

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*Social Science Research Council, Research in Rural Organization, Bulletin No. 12, pp. 3-6.

are not included in this report. Other numbers in this series of reports deal with research relating to these; for example, the reports on Farm Management, the Marketing of Farm Products, Agricultural Credit, Agricultural Insurance, Farm Family Living, and Rural Institutions. But there are some important inter-relations and inter-effects between these types of units and the kinds of organization with which this report is directly concerned; and these are covered in the projects in Group C.

The projects in Group D are miscellaneous in the sense that they do not readily fit into these other groups.

Two types of special-interest organizations are not included in this report. The first is farmers' business organizations, principally represented by the co-operatives, whose research problems are treated in a special report on Agricultural Co-operation. Those interested in rural organization will, however, find many valuable points of analysis and suggestions of method in this report. The interests represented in co-operatives are frequently vital concerns of the members, and forms of organization and details of practice may therefore have more than in social organizations. Hence research issues tend to be more sharply drawn.

The second is farmers' movements as such. These are reserved for the reports on Agricultural Policy in this series. The so-called farm organizations and their problems are similarly classified, so far as the programs of their national and state bodies are concerned.

Although the family and the farm are spoken of above as the units which are organized, this statement must not be taken too specifically. As a matter of fact, in many forms or phases of group action, the individual members of the farm or village family must be considered the units. It is the individual boy or girl who becomes a Scout or joins a 4-H Club. The family however, has much to do with the conduct of the boy or girl as a member of the organization.

Drawing a fine distinction between rural and urban will not be of much moment in this report. In general, rural life must be conceived of as fitting into the whole pattern of society. In its areal and ecological phases this fitting into the general pattern is of such significance. But such general patterns will be considered only as frames of references for the rural part of the organization. This means that research in the organization and layout of cities, and even research in the major features of the layout of the trade areas of our larger cities, is beyond the scope of this report.

An assumption throughout all the discussion of projects following is that when families or farm business units do unite into groups of various kinds either formally or informally, they thereby accomplish certain effects that are ordinarily not attainable by individual farms or farm families acting singly. Out of this conscious or unconscious union of effort a product arises which is over and above that which the various units in the group are likely to produce each acting as one. This additional product arises from the effort of single units the same as does the rest of it; but it would not arise from the effort of individual units if the individual units had to act alone for the reason that the effort would not then be put forth—just as one man will not foolishly attempt to lift a log that it takes ten men to lift. Or it may be additional product that results from the more effective application of individual effort in various sorts of teamwork. The human race has learned that all sorts of things worth while can be accomplished by group action. The increasing discovery of both the potentialities and limits of group action is a large part of the story of social evolution. The ultimate reason for studying social organization is to *discover new possibilities from group action, its limitations and its adaptations adaptions purposes and circumstances.*

As indicated above, such group action may be informal as well as formal and may come into existence almost unconsciously. But even then there is some form of social product, even if it is nothing more than an increase in the meeting together of people for sociability's sake, or in the enjoyment of social intercourse. Otherwise even the informal organization will not persist. Of course it may not be possible to measure this product with any useful degree of precision, nor as a matter of research, as much worth while as concentrating upon other aspects of these types of organization.

In the general field of study of rural organization, more attention than heretofore should be given to the possible advantages of further organization in various types of situation, and to the increment to the social product of the community derivable from further organization of different types. We no longer have a right to assume blandly that more organization of almost any kind will be good for a community, or that the way to get more organization is to set up a new organization. Too much effort has been wasted in the past as the result of such assumptions. Consequently this report places unusual emphasis upon the social product of organization and the effectiveness with which organizational effort is applied.

Rural organization of course has its 'pure' and its 'applied' phases. The former concerns itself with explaining the existence

of various types of organization, their form and structure, and with analyzing their functioning, measuring their inputs and outputs of various kinds and determining the relation between these. Applied social organization takes us into specific areas or localities or situations and attempts to find opportunities for new accomplishment from group action. It then works out the ways and means of organization or reorganization to utilize these opportunities. This may involve the elimination of some organization and greater concentration of effort on those remaining.

The foregoing discussion should make evident that many problems in rural organization analyses draw upon economics as much as upon sociology. To restrict discussion of rural organization to its largely sociological aspects would seriously dismember it. Accordingly no attempt is made to limit any project to its sociological aspects, and some projects are largely economic in content. This latter is particularly true of the ecological type of studies.

THE THEORETICAL BASIS OF RURAL ORGANIZATION RESEARCH*

(BY J. D. BLACK AND C. C. ZIMMERMAN.)

Following is a partial list of the concepts, principles, relationships and measures that are involved in study and research in the field of rural organization. They are included here at the outset of this report, partly as a means of indicating the scope and content of the field, and partly to reveal to the new research worker the body of theoretical material that he needs to digest in order to handle his job properly. They reach widely into various fields of social science. This is because organization is a *coordinating* phase of social science, and hence built upon a foundation of other social sciences.

No attempt is made to analyze any of these concepts, principles, etc., at this point. Many of them are presented at their proper place in the discussion of specific projects following.

By no means are all of the following body of principles and relationships represented in the list of research projects presented later in the report. To have attempted to represent them would have let into fields of research so little explored that no one is as yet competent to offer guidance to his fellows. But future research will no doubt gradually work its way into these fields.

Concepts which need definition: An organization; a community; an institution; a group; social contact; social ties; social bonds; social processes; social structure; social function; social effort; social unit; social product; association; dissociation; disorganization; organizational imput; organization output; social class; social stratification; organization process; social interaction; open country; neighborhood; hamlet; village; town; city; hamlet area; village area; town area; city area; metropolitan community; organic units; interest units; contractual relations.

Classifications and relationships that need to be analyzed:

Classification of social organization on various bases.

Classification of types of services which rural organizations provide.

Separation of social from other human effort and product.

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*Social Science Research Council, Research in Rural Organization, Bulletin No. 12, pp. 6-8.

Classification and definition of the forms of organizational product or output.

Classification and definition of the forms of organizational effort or input.

Definition, classification and measures of types of social contact.

The relation between social contacts and individual personality.

The principles relating to the effectiveness of organizational effort.

The proper degree of intensity of organizational effort under given circumstances.

The difference between the sum of individual efforts and the total organizational output for different kinds of association.

The principles of specialization, of division of labor and of comparative advantage considered in relation to social organization, whether the specialization be within the community or between areas.

The division of functions between different types of organizations.

The principles of combination of factors in an enterprise considered in relation to social organization.

The principle of combination of factors as it had influenced the size of units.

The relation between transportation and the size of units in areal organization.

The principles relating to the areal limits of any given activity or function.

Principles relating to the overhead combinations of units-integration and horizontal combination.

Principles relative to leadership and the overlapping of leadership between different organizations.

The principles determining the locus of an organizational center.

The principles which determine the division of labor between public and private associational activity.

The principles determining the division of labor between organic and interest groups.

The influence of attitudes and character of rural people upon social organization.

The advantage of isolated versus agglomerated habitat in rural communities and the influence of each upon the character of the people.

Relationships of type of habitat to the type and effectiveness of other forms of social organization.

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